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ABSTRACT

This four-part book contains 16 papers that explore the relationship between feminist research and education, especially in Canada. The papers in the first part, "Women as Mothers, Women as Teachers," are as follows: "The Evolution of the Sexual Division of Labour in Teaching" (Danylewycz, Light, Prentice); "More than a Labour of Love" (Task Force on Child Care); and "Constructing Cultural Knowledge" (Griffith, Smith). The following papers appear in the second part of the book, "Unequal Access of Knowledge": "Adolescent Females and Computers" (Collis); "Girls and Science Programs" (Mura, Kimball, Cloutier); "Course Enrollment in the High School" (Gaskell); and "Women and Higher Education in Canadian Society" (Guppy, Balson, Vellutini). The papers of the third part, "The Nature of Curriculum: Whose Knowledge?" include the following: "Two Marys and a Virginia" (Pierson); "National Issues and Curricula Issues" (Sheehan); "An Analysis of Ideological Structures and How Women Are Excluded" (Smith); "Knowledge and Gender in Physical Education" (Dewar); and "Feminism, Women's Studies and the New Academic Freedom" (McCormack). The fourth part, "Beyond Schooling: Adult Education and Training," contains the following papers: "Literacy as Threat/Desire" (Rockhill); "Rethinking Femininity'" (McLaren); "Skill Training in Transition" (Jackson); and "High Hopes and Small Chances" (Tom). An introduction to the book outlines the topics considered in it, and an epilogue suggests future directions. Short biographies of the authors are provided, and the papers contain bibliographies. (KC)

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A Canadian Perspective

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JANE GASKELL

ARLENE McLAREN

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Women and Education

A Canadian Perspective

Editors

Jane S. Gaskell

Arlene Tigar McLaren

Detselig Enterprises Limited
Calgary, Alberta

Jane S. Gaskell
The University of British Columbia
Arlene Tigar McLaren
Simon Fraser University

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Contributors

Doug Balson is a sociology student at U.B.C. He is examining how the role of education changes as the nature of the capitalist economic system evolves.

Renee Cloutier, Ph.D. sociology, is a professor in the department of Educational Administration and Policy at the University of Laval in Quebec City. Her research and teaching focuses on the status of women, higher education (the politics of admission and retention), the social analysis of education, and vocational and educational guidance.

Betty Collis has a B.A. in mathematics from the University of Michigan, an M.A. in the teaching of mathematics from Stanford University, and a Ph.D. in measurement, evaluation, and computer applications from the University of Victoria. She is currently an associate professor in the department of Psychological Foundations at the University of Victoria. She is involved with computers in education at the international, national, and local levels and frequently speaks and writes on equity issues and school computers.

Marta Danylewycz was an assistant professor of History at Atkinson College, York University, when her life was tragically cut short in March, 1985. The author of articles on the history of teachers and of religious women, she was revising her doctoral thesis on the latter for publication at the time of her death. In this study, *Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), the lives of teaching sisters are compared with those of the laywomen who taught, as part of the larger story of two of Quebec's most interesting female religious orders, the Sisters of *Misericorde* and the Congregation of Notre Dame.

Alison Dewar is currently an assistant professor in the department of Physical Education, Health and Sport Studies at Miami University, Ohio. Born in Scotland, she has has lived in Hong Kong, Scotland, Canada and the United States. She did her undergraduate work in physical education and taught physical education at the secondary level for two years before moving to Canada to pursue graduate studies at the University of British Columbia. Her doctoral dissertation and recent work present a feminist critique of the social construction of knowledge about gender in physical education.

Jane S. Gaskell is an associate professor in the department of Social and Educational Studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. She grew up in Toronto, attended Swarthmore College and Harvard University. Her first academic job was at Queen's University. As a doctoral student in the late 60s, she became involved in the women's movement and wrote a thesis on the sex role attitudes and aspirations of high school girls. Since then, she has shifted her methodological and theoretical stance but has continued to do research on women, work and education. Her recent research is on the organization of clerical training programs. Her work has appeared in a wide variety of journals and policy papers.

Alison I. Griffith received her B.A. at Simon Fraser University, her M.A. at the University of British Columbia, and her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. She is the co-principal investigator for the SSHRC project "Education and the Social Organization of Mother's Work" with Dorothy Smith. She also works as a research consultant in such diverse areas as commercial diving and pay equity, as well as in the areas of the family and the education system represented in this volume.

Neil Guppy is an associate professor in the Anthropology and Sociology department at U.B.C. In addition to co-editing a book on the B.C. fishing industry, *Uncommon Property*, he has written recent articles on educational accessibility and political representation. Currently, he is working on a project examining women and professional employment.

Nancy S. Jackson is a Ph.D. candidate from the University of British Columbia, currently completing her thesis as a visiting student in the department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Her thesis is a critical analysis of competency-based curriculum design in college programs in British Columbia, and her continuing research interest is in technical education at the post-secondary level. Her academic background is in qualitative sociological methods and the social organization of knowledge. She has teaching and research experience in sociology of education, women's studies, technological change, labour process, and organizations. She has been active as a feminist in community-based research and adult education as well as professional associations in education and sociology.

Meredith Kimball received her B.A. in psychology from Macalester College and her Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan. She has taught in the Psychology department and the Women's Studies Program at Simon Fraser University since 1976. Her research has focused on women and achievement, sex-related differences in intellectual abilities and women and aging. In the area of women and achievement she has examined sex-related differences in intellectual abilities, especially visual-spatial abilities, biological theories of sex-related differences, and the effects of feedback on performance expectancies.

Beth Light is a research associate in the Centre for Women's Studies in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She is the co-author of a bibliography and three documentary studies in Canadian women's history. She is currently working on a fourth documentary history and with a collective of historians on a forthcoming textbook examining Canadian women throughout history.

Thelma McCormack is a professor of Sociology at York University, the former president of the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, and the first incumbent of the E. Margaret Fulton chair in Women's Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. She has published extensively in the area of women's studies, feminist theory, the mass media of communication, political sociology and the sociology of health and illness. The article included in this volume is an extension of her work on a feminist understanding of civil liberties. She has two daughters, one grandchild and a computer named Rosa Luxemberg.

Arlene Tigar McLaren is a member of the department of Sociology and Anthropology at Simon Fraser University. She was born in Vancouver and educated at the University of British Columbia, University of Iowa, and the London School of Economics. Since 1970, when she helped establish the first abortion referral clinic in Calgary, she has been involved with feminist issues. She has written on women in adult education, women as elders, abortion deaths, and women and families in Canadian isolated communities. She has also published *Ambitions and Realizations: Women in Adult Education*, and (with Angus McLaren) *The Bedroom and the State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Canadian Birth Control and Abortion, 1880-1980.*

Roberta Mura is a professor in the Faculty of Education at Laval University in Quebec City. She is also a member of the Multidisciplinary Feminist Research Group (GREMF) at the same university. She obtained a laurea in mathematics from the University of Milan (1969) before emigrating to Canada, where she received her Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Alberta (1974). Since 1976 she has worked in mathematics education and, more recently, in the area of gender issues. Between 1980 and 1984 she was the Canadian national coordinator of the International Organization for Women and Mathematics Education (IOWME).

Ruth Roach Pierson is the author of *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986) and editor of *Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical and Practical Perspectives* (London: Croom Helm, 1987). An associate professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, she teaches women's history and feminist studies in the departments of History and Philosophy of Education and Sociology in Education.

Alison Prentice teaches History at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She has written books and articles on the origins of modern schooling and the history of women and education and is engaged in an ongoing project to study the changing experience of women in teaching. A member of the Canadian women's history group at OISE, she has also worked to promote the teaching of women's history in Canada through the creation of documentary studies, essay collections and, more recently, a textbook on the history of Canadian women.

Kathleen Rockhill received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1972. After teaching at Rutgers University in New Jersey for three years, she returned, this time as a single parent with two sons, to the west coast where she taught in the department of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles. It was during this time that she undertook the research on immigrants and literacy. In 1983 she joined the faculty in the department of Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education where she teaches courses in feminist theory, education and interpretive approaches to research. She is currently working on questions of gendered subjectivity, violence, sexuality, and comparative approaches to feminist politics.

Nancy M. Sheehan is Dean of Education at the University of British Columbia, coming to U.B.C. from the University of Calgary where she was professor of educational history and Associate Dean (Academic Programs) in the Faculty of Education. Her research interests have been directed toward voluntary organizations and their influence on the school curriculum in the early decades of this century. More recently she has been looking at the influence of World War I on the school and the curriculum in English Canada. Besides co-editing several books she has published in major Canadian and international journals.

Dorothy E. Smith was born in England. She obtained her bachelor's degree at the London School of Economics after some years in the workforce (mainly as a secretary). She completed her doctorate in Sociology at the University of California at Berkeley and after brief stints of teaching there and at the University of Essex in England, she came in 1968, with her two small sons, to Canada to teach at the University of British Columbia. She is now in the department of Sociology in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She has been active in the women's movement in the university and the community and in her writing. She has written on Marxism and feminism and on the epistemological implications of feminism for the social sciences; her book on *The Everyday World as Problematic* will be published in the Fall of 1987 by Northeastern University Press.

Allison Read Tom is an education and training consultant for the Women's Bureau of Labour in Canada in Ottawa. She earned her B.A. in Anthropology at Wesleyan University (Middletown, Conn.). Her M.A. in Anthropology and Ph.D. in Anthropology and Education are from Stanford University (California).

Susan Vellutini is a sociology student at U.B.C. She is researching changes in access to post-secondary education – concentrating on participation differences from women and socioeconomic classes in the last two decades.

Introduction

This is a book that explores the relationship between feminist research and education. What unites the contributors to this volume is their insistence on the importance of female experiences, and their commitment to changes in education that will further women's equality with men.

Ideally, education and feminism have much in common – they aim to empower all people, and to provide opportunities for the full expression of human potential. In reality, the practice of schooling and the multi-faceted expressions of the women's movement have often come into conflict. For many decades feminists have challenged the existing organization of education in Canada and elsewhere. This book examines that challenge and indicates how feminist thought can help illuminate the fundamental issues of schooling. In contrast to standard works on education, which regularly exclude women, this book argues that female experiences are central to the educational enterprise. By exploring the questions raised by feminist educational scholarship, it introduces new approaches to thinking about education in general, ways to understand better the complex relations between education and the host society.

Women and Education: A Canadian Perspective is intended for both researchers and students in education in the hope that they will be sensitized to and interested in the issues raised by the women's movement. The book will also be of interest to teachers and students of women's studies, areas in which material on education is hard to locate and synthesize.

This book draws on the work of Canadian scholars and addresses issues in Canadian education. While Canadian scholarship flourishes in the context of international debate and research, it also continues to develop in particularly Canadian directions, reflecting the particular organization of education in Canada and the particular development of feminism. Yet research statements on education on a national scale have been lacking in Canada. Although the federal government funds much of higher education and controls many jog training programs, Canadian education is under provincial jurisdiction. National debates about education are at best irregular occurrences and large-scale funding of educational research remains episodic. In the United States, evaluation of federal sexual equity legislation, demonstration projects and major research grants have produced a wealth of policy findings (Klein et al, 1985). In Britain, too, the production of policy-related and theoretical scholarship on women and education has been substantial (Deem, 1980; David, 1980; McDonald, 1981; Whyte et al., 1985). In contrast, Canadians had to wait until now to see the first book-length overview of Canadian scholarship on women and education.

Feminist thought has a long history in Canada, and feminism has meant different things to different people at different times. But common themes also emerge. Above all, feminism insists on the importance of gender. Gender is fundamental to the ways we interact with each other, to the ways our public and

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private lives are organized. Its significance is evident almost everywhere we look – in the wages of men and women, in the structuring of friendships, in the persistence of Cinderella myths, and in the organization of domestic tasks. Feminism insists that the difference gender makes is historically constructed and gives men power over women. The forms of gender inequality past and present are many. They are no simple reflection of biological differences in a social form, but are an integral part of the complex social arrangements that constitute a society. Men and women do not live in 'separate but equal' spheres. What women do is valued and rewarded less than what men do.

Feminism attempts to redress this inequality. It is directed towards change. These essays are not the result of disinterested academic enterprise. Rather, they form part of an action-oriented agenda that can help to eliminate gender-based imbalances in education. Education has always played an important part in the feminist political agenda, partly because woman have had special responsibilities for children, partly because teaching has offered opportunities to so many educated women, including many of the early feminists, and partly because education promises hope for change in a new generation.

Sex Roles and Sex Role Stereotyping

Despite the commonalities among those who would call themselves feminists, there are also many differences. Feminism has changed over time, and at any one time there have been and still are disagreements and controversies. The first stage in the re-emergence of feminism in Canada was marked by the publication in 1970 of the report of the Royal Commission on The Status of Women. The report paid a great deal of attention to education, stating, "Changes in education could bring dramatic improvements in the social and economic position of women in an astonishingly short time. Equal opportunity for education is fundamental. Education opens the door to almost every life goal. Wherever women are denied access to education they cannot be said to have equality."

The section on education in the report reflects the emphasis in the late 1960s and early 1970s, on the way young children were socialized into "sex roles" in the school as well as in the family. Boys got blue blankets in the hospital; girls got pink ones. Little girls were given dolls; little boys were given trucks. In school boys got the projector, girls cleaned the brushes.

Before the advent of feminist social science, psychologists had been studying the process of sex role socialization for years. They argued that sex roles were biologically based. They claimed further that learning "sex-appropriate" behaviours and traits in childhood was one of the prerequisites for adult mental health and smooth social functioning (Parsons, 1942; Kagan, 1964). They assumed that sex differences were important, that boys should be clear they were boys and girls should be clear they were girls. Boys were strong, independent and ambitious; girls were soft, kind and nurturant. The process of schooling could contribute to the individual and the society by communicating and reinforcing the differences. If there was a problem, it concerned boys, not girls. Commentators were preoccupied with the trouble little boys had with reading, blaming it on what came to be called the "feminized" classroom (Sexton, 1969). Teachers were encouraged to use books which represented the world of little boys, in an attempt to cater to their needs in the classroom.

In the early 1970s, feminists began to question whether "sex-appropriate" behaviours were such a boon to the individual or to the society. As Greenglass wrote in the first collection of research articles on women in Canada:

> Intensive differential socialization programs for male and female result in members of the two sexes seeking and valuing quite different experiences and attributes within themselves. While attributes such as independence, aggressiveness, and competitiveness are rewarded and encouraged in males because these are the characteristics perceived as essential for success in traditionally male-dominated fields, dependence, passivity, and compliance are rewarded in females. Hardly those traits making for success . . . If male and female teachers think that females are intellectually inferior to males . . . females students are less likely to have original intellectual contributions to make, and they are less likely to be logical (1973, pp. 112-113).

Feminists wanted to eliminate the emphasis on sex differences, to make education blind to gender, and to replace sex roles with androgyny. "Sex-appropriate roles" could also be called stereotypes; "sex role socialization" could be called discrimination, and "sex differences" could be called inequalities. Renaming the world and giving voice to women's experiences was what feminism was about. In this spirit, feminists documented gender stereotypes in many jurisdictions and in various ways. Their research became an assault on the notion that the sexes were separate but equal, and an assertion that "sex roles," rather than serving everyone's interest, inhibited achievement among women and the full development of both sexes. The female stereotype, feminist research showed, had negative consequences. Sexism was defined not just as a system of difference, but as a system of oppression.

Feminist researchers were particularly concerned about the books used in early grades in school. The Royal Commission's study on sex role imagery in the textbooks used to teach reading, social studies, science, mathematics and guidance courses in Canadian schools concluded that "a woman's creative and intellectual potential is either underplayed or ignored in the education of children from their earliest years. The sex roles described in these textbooks provide few challenging models for young girls, and they fail to create a sense of community between men and women as fellow human beings." The many studies that followed confirmed their verdict. (Pyke, 1975; Gaskell, 1977; Fisher and Cheyne, 1977; Batcher et al., 1975; Women in Teaching, 1975; Pascoe, 1975; Cullin, 1972).

These studies revealed that women were underrepresented in school books, and that when they were represented, they were stereotyped. Boys were stereotyped in more powerful and active roles. Little girls in elementary texts played with dolls while their brothers played baseball; mothers wore aprons and baked cookies, while fathers drove off to work; adult women were princesses and witches, while men were doctors and farmers.

The critique of sex role socialization also focussed on the more intangible social relations of sex role stereotyping by teachers, parents and school practices (Spinks, 1970; Shack, 1966). This was harder to document, but it was a field ripe for scholarly work and feminist critique. Feminist scholars documented and questioned practices such as having separate playgrounds and line-ups for girls and boys, allocating different chores for boys and for girls, and having girls and boys compete against each other. Teachers' expectations about the capacities and interests of males and females were revealed to be stereotyped. (Eichler, 1979; Ricks and Pyke, 1973; Russell, 1979). Studies showed that boys received more attention from teachers than girls. The research amounted to a well documented assault on stereotyping in its various guises in the school (Wilkinson and Marrett, 1985).

The research, in combination with political lobbying, had an effect. Under pressure from women's groups, publishers and ministries of education across the country appointed advisory groups on sexism and began to issue new guidelines for non-sexist materials. In B.C. in 1974, for example, the ministry of education, which had appointed a provincial advisory committee and a special advisor on sex discrimination, issued a directive "On the Equal Treatment of the Sexes: Guideline for Educational Materials." The guidelines were "to make educators aware of the ways in which males and females have been stereotyped" and "to assist educators and others who seek to provide equal treatment of the sexes in textbooks." The same year, the Ontario Status of Women Council published *About Face: Towards a Positive Image of Women in Textbooks*, and in 1976, the Quebec government published *L'Ecole Sexiste, C'est Quoi?*

Alternative materials were developed and published. The B.C. Teachers Federation published *Breaking the Mould: Non Sexist Curricula Materials for B.C. Elementary Schools* in 1975. In 1977 the B.C. ministry issued a Resource Guide for Teachers in Women's Studies, and an annotated bibliography of materials that might be used in courses. In 1976, the Ontario ministry of education published a resource guide entitled, *Sex-Role Stereotyping and Women's Studies* "to assist educators in the on-going task of developing a learning environment that is free from sex role stereotyping of males and females and a curriculum that accurately depicts the roles of women."

By the early 1980s there had been a dramatic change in the primary readers that were being issued. Equal numbers of males and females were represented. The stereotypes began to disappear. The new readers had boys playing with girls, and represented adult women as police officers and doctors. The old books continue to be used in schools because of the costs of replacing materials as well as the preferences of teachers (Galloway, 1980), and the implementation of non-sexist guidelines is more difficult than their promulgation (National Film Board, 1986). But significant victories were won and progress was made. Girls no longer had to take home economics while boys took industrial education. Teachers had been exposed to discussions of the issues of sex discrimination. Segregated staffrooms and playgrounds became less common.

This attention to sex role stereotyping in its various guises dominated the study of gender and education well into the mid-1970s. The approach was basically derived from psychology, from the child development literature and the study of sex differences. The aim was equal treatment in order to provide equal opportunity in the school. Few could disagree with the goal or the research. It produced a near consensus among feminists about the problems and solutions to gender inequality in schools.

By the late '70s, other issues – excellence, multiculturalism or vocational preparation – were, however, replacing the issue of gender inequality on the agenda of school boards. There was some sense that battles had been won, making it less urgent to continue the attack on gender inequality. As well, a resurgence of conservative thought emerged that questioned whether they should be taken on at all. The voice of the new right was increasingly heard, calling for a return to traditional family structures, objecting to affirmative action, and to day care. The media hailed the demise of the feminist movement, portraying women as moving into professional positions in increasing numbers, dressing for success and hiring nannies. But women's inequality persisted. Women continued to earn about 60 percent of what men earned, girls still aspired to traditionally female jobs and decent child care remained hard to find.

Revaluing the Female

In academic circles the concern for adding women into research nevertheless continued to gain momentum. It was supported by the emergence of journals devoted to the study of women, the appearance of women's studies programs and the increase in the number of women academics who brought their own experiences and questions to their research. In 1972, a journal now called *Resources for Feminist Research* was founded in order to provide reviews, bibliographies and a comprehensive periodical and resources guide to materials being published on women. *Atlantis*, a journal of women's studies, was founded in 1976 in Atlantic Canada. University women's studies courses appeared at Concordia in 1971, at the University of Toronto in 1972, at U.B.C. in 1973 and Simon Fraser in 1975 (Strong-Boag, 1983). The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council initiated a program of funding research on "Women and Work" broadly construed to "foster and encourage research and scholarship which is non-sexist in language and methodology and which will contribute to an integrated understanding of women's paid and unpaid work."

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women was begun in 1976, and the Canadian Women's Studies Association was founded in 1982. Five regional chairs in women's studies were funded by the Secretary of State from 1983 to 1985.

This infrastructure has allowed a multifaceted and complex scholarship on women to develop. Feminist scholarship has been having an impact on academic work in every discipline and field of study, although the progress remains slow and far from even (Langland and Gove, 1983; Dubois et al., 1985). In part, this has meant an explosion of knowledge about women's experience. Where women were invisible in academic texts, they are beginning to have a presence. Where questions about women were never asked, they are now being pursued. The enormous gaps in our knowledge about how women live, think and feel are providing opportunities for new research and innovative scholarship.

This constituted a second phase in feminist scholarship, a phase of revaluing the female, instead of dismissing gender differences. Where the female stereotype had been criticized for inhibiting women's achievement, it was reassessed for its positive aspects. Nurturance, sociability and interdependence, feminists argued, can foster learning, can be important in schools, and have been too often devalued by those who care only for achievement in its narrowest sense. As Jeri Wine (1982) points out, "the large literature on psychological sex differences is highly problematic from a feminist perspective, because of its apparent demonstration of the inferiority of the female. In this work, the guiding assumptions are that any characteristic that males have more of than do females is an essential characteristic, a mark of superiority, while any characteristic that females have more of is a sign of weakness, of inferiority. Women's investment in the interpersonal realm has been consistently devalued in psychology, our connectedness with others seen as pathological dependency needs, nurturance and interpersonal sensitivity defined as weakness" (p. 70).

Instead of centering our analysis on how we can make women less defective, how we can get rid of sex roles, and make women more like men, Wine argues we must value the female, and build on it. Women do not have to be like men to deserve equal respect, and power. If women did have this power, they would be able to make the world a safer and more pleasant place for everyone. As Finn and Miles (1982) put it, "female characteristics, concerns, and abilities, marginalized in industrial society, are necessarily central to the building of a new more fully human society. The holistic, collective, intuitive, co-operative, emotional, nurturing, democratic, integrated, internal, and natural are affirmed against the over-valuation of the competitive, analytical, rational, hierarchical, fragmented, external and artificial" (p. 13).

There are many examples of how this work can suggest a re-examination of educational issues. For example, Martin (1985) has argued that those who debate the purposes of education have misconstrued the arguments of such great philosophers as Rousseau and Plato by dismissing their discussions of the education of women as unimportant. The ideals they held out for men's education – the rational and productive ideals we now apply to the education of both sexes – omit, even while they depend upon, the existence of a different kind of education, one concerned with caring and reproduction in its broadest sense including the rearing of children. This education has been relegated to second class status; Rousseau assigned it to Sophie, Plato assigned it to the lower classes. Both recognized its necessity, and how the education of the dominant group depended on it. Martin argues we must reincorporate "female" education into the education we give everyone. To revalue the female, we must reevaluate the totality of education.

Rethinking the Whole

As Martin's work shows, the process of revaluing the feminine has led to a third stage of feminist thought, where feminist scholarship means more than adding women onto existing lines of inquiry and more than revaluing the female as femaleness has been formed in a male-dominated society. By itself, revaluing the female falls prey to condoning characteristics that women have developed in response to male domination, and to automatically denigrating male characteristics. More recent feminist thought suggests that a new synthesis needs to be created for everyone, a synthesis that allows both male and female experiences to be seen in all their variety, to be valued, and most importantly, to be rethought.

For scholarship, this third stage of feminism has meant an alteration in the questions that are asked, in the theoretical stances that are adopted, and in the methods that are used to create new knowledge. The main question is not so much how we are made into male or female, or how we are valued as gendered beings; rather it is how our knowledge of the world has been shaped by gender, and more particularly, by male domination. "Malestream" thought, as Mary O'Brien (1981) has dubbed traditional scholarship, is revealed as partial, based in male experience, and therefore inadequate. Seemingly objective and value-free inquiry is revealed to be based on unexamined assumptions about male and female. As Eichler and Lapointe (1985) have pointed out,

> As long as women were de facto excluded from academic work and higher education, sex related bias in research was not widely recognized as a problem for the social sciences and humanities. Culture and our way of thinking were shaped by a male perspective which applied even when the life, identity and thoughts of women were considered. There was little or no awareness that such an androcentric perspective generates serious intellectual problems. (p. 5)

Exposing these intellectual problems has been grist for the mill of feminist scholarship. Rethinking any number of problems to incorporate women's experience has led to new questions, new models, and new methods. To take an example: Much of the research on the relationship between schooling and experience in the work force was done on males because males moved more predictably from school to work and stayed at work for long periods of time, and because the work force experience of men (not women) was considered fundamental to family stability and income distribution in the society. The research was done by correlating the number of years of schooling a man had, with his income and the status of his job. There was a strong relationship and this research tradition, known as status attainment research, grew in sophistication and importance, pointing always to the role of education in labour force attainment (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Jencks, 1972; Porter, Porter and Blishen, 1982).

When attempts were made to add women in, researchers confronted new methodological problems. They had to decide how to treat "housewife" as an unpaid occupation, and how to add in new variables like "sex role attitude" to explain some of the new variance (Porter, Porter and Blishen, 1982). Moreover, a series of new questions about the research paradigm itself emerged. Women's education is correlated with their occupational attainment and income, but the same education gets women a much lower income that it gets a man. Status attainment models cannot account for the difference. Explaining the results requires taking a look at the ways jobs are organized and segregated by sex, and at the history and sociology of work. It requires breaking down education by type of schooling, not just by amount, and asking how different jobs come to require different types and amounts of formal educational preparation. It requires asking questions about the relationship between domestic and paid labour, questions which had been ignored when only men were included in the analysis. Incorporating gender makes clear the taken for granted and male assumptions that have underlain the research model and leads to a renewed dialogue about the adequacy of the models, their limitations and their uses (O'Donnell, 1984; Gaskell, 1981; Sokoloff, 1980).

This same process can be illustrated in many areas of study from moral development (Gilligan, 1982) to the fur trade (Van Kirk, 1980) to achievement motivation (Kaufman and Richardson, 1982) to "ways of knowing" (Belenky, et al, 1986). Our scholarship is richer for the questions that are posed by scholarship that takes women's experience seriously and tries to rethink the whole by reincorporating both men and women's experiences.

Feminism and Educational Scholarship

The academy has provided a setting within which feminist scholarship has grown and has developed its own institutions. But the academy has not always welcomed the change. The resistance could be illustrated in many stories as it has been in many reports on the status of women in universities across Canada (McIntyre, 1986; Franklin, Bertrand, and Gordon, 1986).

Perhaps most relevant to this book are the notes taken down by a graduate student who was distributing notices for the conference on which this book is based. As she put the brochures, prominently labelled "Women and Education" in the mail boxes of faculty members, she recorded the following comments:

> "Women and education. Christ! There wouldn't be much to say about that, would there?"
>
> (addressed to mailroom clerk) "Women and education – geez! Is that the best you can do for me?"
>
> "Women and education – isn't that a contradiction in terms? Ha, ha, ha!"
>
> "Women and education. Oh, women's lib stuff, eh?"

Despite the opposition and skepticism, the conference did receive university support, as well as support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The conference and this book demonstrate that there is a good deal to say, not just about women in education but about its implications for the way we study and think about the entire process of education.

Until recently, scholars in education, like scholars in other fields, largely ignored the study of women. They have considered learning and teaching to be quite independent of gender issues. They have examined the governance and organization of education, the curriculum, even issues of access and equality, without mention of male and female.

There are several ways in which education stands out as an important field of study for feminists, and a field that might be particularly receptive to feminism. First, education has had a higher proportion of female students and faculty than most other areas on university campuses. In 1983/84, women constituted 72% of the undergraduate enrollment, 58% of the graduate enrollment and 24% of the faculty members in education. This is well above the average across campus.

Education is also a field that consciously links theory to practice. Research in education is carried out, in one way or another, to improve the ways we educate students. Educational research is not a disinterested exercise, but rather is directed towards practical and ultimately political ends. Like feminist scholarship, it is directed toward changing practice, toward producing conditions where all students learn more, have more control over their lives. Like feminist scholarship, it ultimately involves judgements about what is a desirable outcome for others.

Finally, education is an interdisciplinary field, drawing on a variety of modes of inquiry to understand a social phenomenon. In this way it is like women's studies. Psychologists with a concern for sex role stereotypes no longer dominate the study of gender in education. Historians, sociologists, economists and political scientists debate what constitutes feminist pedagogy, how women's experience has shaped schooling, how the organization of educational institutions excludes women and what counts as education, as knowledge, as achievement. In its interdisciplinary approach to real world problems, then, educational scholarship and feminist scholarship take parallel paths.

Ironically, however, this has not led to a greater attention to gender issues in education, relative to other fields. The Social Sciences Federation of Canada's 1986 report on sexism indicated that education was less likely than other fields to show concern about the place and role of women in professional and scientific activity. The *Canadian Journal of Education* has published fewer articles on women over the past five years than the leading Canadian journals in such related academic fields as history, sociology, and psychology which have a lower representation of women (Maciejko, 1987). Dubois et al. (1985) pointed out that in American journals, "education is especially prone to isolate work on women in special issues and virtually no attention is paid to women or to gender differences in research that is not specifically devoted to women."

The dominance of men in positions of authority in education, along with a concern that the large number of females in the field is somehow linked to inferiority and low status, seem to have led rather to an avoidance of academic work about, or for, women. While the similarities between educational research and feminist research are important, the very political nature of education can make educators particularly wary of those with a "political axe to grind," and anxious to adopt a research stance that places them outside the political arena.

But the relation between thought, research and political action is under intense scrutiny throughout the academy. Even in the traditional disciplines, commentators have become increasingly sensitive to the role of subjectivity, and the importance of the researcher in shaping academic questions, choosing sources of data, and determining appropriate analyses and standards of proof (Gergen, 1982; Alexander, 1982; Fiske and Schweder, 1986; Allender, 1986). It is increasingly accepted that all research is socially located and value laden, rather than disinterested and objective. No discourse exists without a subject speaking, a subject who speaks in a particular voice, reflecting particular values and taken for granted assumptions. The study of women in education illustrates the links between the content of scholarly work and its social context. It has grown with the feminist movement and reflects the issues and experiences that arise there.

This book does not aim to be a disinterested academic enterprise. It is linked to a concern for gender equity. Just what this would look like can be debated. But the fact that feminist scholarship is concerned with social change, as well as academic inquiry is central to our work.

Diversity and the Organization of This Book

As the "sex role" paradigm breaks down, some of the political divisions within feminism become clearer. There are a variety of ways to describe the differences (Eisenstein, 1984; DuBois et al., 1985), and each topic and each historical period generates its own controversies as the various sections in this book will demonstrate. In each section, we describe a variety of feminist approaches that are relevant to the subject of the section. The categories we use vary depending on what the issues are in traditional scholarship as well as on what kind of feminist debates are relevant.

In an overview of feminist thought, it is customary to divide the ideas along the traditional political lines of liberal, radical and socialist. Put briefly, liberal feminists are concerned with providing equal opportunities for women to participate in the social and economic institutions that exist. Both socialist and radical feminists are concerned with changing those institutions so that they create less inequality in power, status and income. Radical feminists locate the causes of gender oppression in patriarchy, in male ownership and control of social, ideological and economic processes. They want more space, power and attention to women's concerns. Socialist feminists locate the causes of gender oppression in economic structures that benefit the few. They examine the way capitalism shapes gender relations in modern industrial societies. They want to transform the structures in their entirety. Such political orientations are useful to keep in mind in a general way. They alert us to an author's assumptions and the implications of his/her ideas. In many cases, however, the distinctions are not clear ones. Changing opportunities for women demands changing social structures: changing patriarchy demands changing economic processes, and changing capitalism can involve challenging male power. Indeed, few writers can be placed easily into one political camp as opposed to another. We find that these divisions correspond roughly to the three phases of feminist scholarship on education outlined above.

There are no easy goals, much less victories, in feminist educational thought. But the questions are exciting and the struggle invigorating. The purpose of this book is to introduce the new feminist debate and the varied forms that the study of women in education can take and is taking.

This book is divided into four sections, charting four ways in which feminist work has forced us to see major issues in education differently. The first section examines the study of teachers and mothers, the women who in various ways are responsible for much of the education that goes on. The fact that these people are women makes a difference. It has led to the invisibility and devaluing of the work that is done. It has had an impact on the organization of schools and families. It demands that those studying education take into account the extreme segregation of work into "men's work" and "women's work."

The second section examines differences in the educational attainment of men and women. The research explores how schools are involved in producing gender inequality through regulating access to skills, credentials, and ultimately the labour market. When gender inequality is examined, we see that some of the traditional male-oriented models of how inequality in schools is produced and how it is linked to inequality in the labour force, need to be rethought. Contrary to the existing myth, getting a good education has not improved women's position in the labour force in relation to men.

The third section looks at what counts as important knowledge to be taught to students. The "taken for granted" curriculum has for decades excluded and misrepresented women's experience. To understand how, why and what to do about it demands rethinking what the curriculum represents, how it is arrived at, and how it can be changed. It involves bringing a critical perspective and the tools of the sociology of knowledge and social history to bear on discussions about what is and should be taught.

The final section of the book looks at education that takes place outside the traditional arena of schooling, and calls our attention to the fact that we learn most of what we know outside schools. To understand what women know and what they need to know, we are drawn to places which have been relatively ignored in the study of education, but which are increasingly important. By looking at a variety of institutional arrangements for learning, we come to better understand the peculiarities of what we commonly take for granted as "school."

We have tried to illustrate and explore diverse strands of feminist scholarship in the selections in this book, by including a variety of methodologies and disciplines. But these articles do not cover all the topics or modes of inquiry that are part of Canadian feminist scholarship on education. There are gaps in our selection of articles, for our selection reflects the emphases of scholarship of the moment. But gaps could be filled by a more extensive collection of work. We hope this book will encourage our readers to look further at topics we have not been able to examine here – such as the experience of women in different racial and ethnic groups, the representation of women in administrative and policy processes, the ways classroom interactions are affected by gender, and so on – and to carry forward their own research and teaching with feminist questions in mind. The references attached to each section introduction and each chapter will serve as a guide to further reading and research.

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Introduction to Part One: Women as Mothers, Women as Teachers

This section examines the activities of three groups involved in education: school teachers, child care providers, and mothers. In most books on education, only teachers would be included. Though child care providers and mothers teach children, commentators do not usually consider them as educators. Feminists have, on the other hand, stressed the commonalities of education activities within and outside schools, most of which are the responsibility of women. As O'Brien (1983, p.10) notes, a primary problem for women in education is the public-realm definition of the educational process.

From Durkheim (1956) onward, sociologists have assumed that with industrialization the family lost its major functions in economic production and education. Families were no longer adequate for teaching children specialized skills and the moral values of society. Children needed to be taken out of their families and taught the ways of the wider society in publicly controlled schools (Durkheim, 1956; Parsons, 1959). Economic production left the control of the family to take place in enterprises that were controlled by employers. The family became a residual institution, the place of women, and of little importance in determining economic work of educational activity.

With the separation of the role of the family and the role of public institutions, the story goes, the work of women and men also became clearly separated. Women stayed in the family, in the private world of the home. Men went out to the increasingly important public spheres of the economy, politics, religion, education, and so forth. Men were to carry out instrumental roles as breadwinners outside the home, to work and take responsibility for linking the family to the wider social system. Women were to carry out expressive roles as housewives and mothers inside the home; they were to be responsible for the emotional and physical care of family members. This separation of roles was elevated to the status of myth, of an official ideology which insists that women's place is in the home and men are the providers.

This ideology rests on the premise that men and women are naturally suited for different activities, by virtue of their biology. In 1856 in his lecture at the YMCA in Halifax, Reverend Robert Sedgewick expressed this view:

> As to the idea that woman has a self evident and inalienable right to assist in the government of the race, I reply she does assist in that government now, and would to heaven she would exercise a still larger share in its administration. But this great work, like all others, is naturally divided between the sexes, the nobler government of children belonging to women, the less noble government of adults to man. (Sedgewick, 1856, p.13)

The ideology proclaimed the importance of both male and female spheres, but granted power to the male. The belief in separate spheres became an ideology about the inherent differences between the sexes, and the superiority of masculinity over femininity.

In fact, this myth misrepresented women's work then, as it does now. No clear line divides the "public" and "private" realms. Women work both inside and outside the home. They work in the "public realm;" many, for example, are employed as teachers. Their work in the home is laborious and complex, a result of social learning, not biological impulse. Taking care of others is taxing and requires skills. Household tasks are not naturally and inevitably the responsibilities of women; men can do them. The allocation of household labour to women is a social and patriarchal construction (Rich, 1977; Thorne & Yalom, 1982; Gittens, 1985). Further, rather than being separate spheres, the so-called public realm of waged labour, and the so-called private realm of unpaid labour in the home interpenetrate, each affecting the performance of the other (Jaggar & McBride, 1985; Maroney, 1985).

By examining teachers, child care workers, and mothers as a group, we can begin to explore their differences and similarities, and their relationships to one another. Women's work in each sphere has a different history, and has developed different structures and meanings. But because they are all concerned with the well-being of children and are carried out largely by women, they are alike in some ways and are interrelated. They also affect one another. Three of these similarities will be pointed out here. First they are all sexually segregated forms of work; second, they are undervalued by society; third, they are perceived in ways that emphasize the gendered nature of the work and ignore its working conditions.

The Sexual Division of Labour

That women and men carry out different kinds of work is easy to take for granted. But the sexual division of labour is a shifting and historically specific social product, not a result of biological givens. It is important to ask why women "mother" and men "work." And it is important to ask why women who work outside the home are more likely to be teachers than engineers, secretaries than plumbers.

In the Canadian home, a clear division of labour has developed, especially since the nineteenth century. Even though fathers are usually present and involved with children, mothers remain the primary caregivers. When a child is born, a mother is more likely than a father to leave the workforce in order to stay at home to look after the child. If a mother is employed outside the home, she is more likely than a father to be largely responsible for child care (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984; Kome, 1982; Luxton, 1980). If parents separate, mothers are more likely than fathers to gain primary custody of their child(ren). In 1984, 16% of all Canadian families were composed of only one parent and their child(ren). In the vast majority of cases, the parent was female (Pol &Moore, 1986, p.13).

The fact that child care is considered women's work influences the public education system. Very few men look after other people's young children. As we move up the age ladder from pre-schools to universities, the proportion of female teachers in Canada drops dramatically. Women constitute about 95% of child care providers, 72% of elementary teachers, but only about 35% of secondary teachers and 17% of university teachers (Statistics Canada, 1986b; Statistics Canada, 1987).[1]

Though women teachers are dominant in numbers in western educational systems, they are not dominant in the exercise of authority. Women teach, but men manage (Strober & Tyack, 1980). Women are much less likely than men to be principals (Statistics Canada, 1986a, p.208), superintendents or ministers of education (Apple, 1983).

Because of such a strong division of labour, we cannot possibly understand educational work without considering it as a gendered experience (Apple, 1983; Lather, 1986). Yet discussions of teachers usually ignore the fact that teaching is organized by gender divisions. A recent sociological text, *Canadian Education* (Martin & Macdonell, 1982, p.109), mentions only in passing that Canada has more female than male full-time teachers. The authors provide little commentary on how women and men are distributed within the educational system, why their access to jobs is so different, and what such differences imply. Devaluation of Women's Work

"Women's work" tends to be devalued in male society. The devaluation of women's educational work can be seen most simply in wage differentials; it can also be seen through the prestige that is accorded to the work.

Women's educational work is considered private, of no economic value unless it is done by a babysitter, a teacher or a child care provider. Women's work in the home is supposed to be based on a male breadwinner's wage. As "personal dependents" of their partners, women are economically, socially, and/or legally tied to another person who has authority over them (Eichler, 1973, p.52). Research on wage sharing inside families is sparse, but shows women often do not have access to their partners' wages (Luxton, 1980, p.165; Comer, 1982, p.185). Because a mother does not receive a wage her work is invisible in economic terms.

> If a mother is not in the labour force, she is not working; she is caring for her children. Only if the mother is replaced in looking after her children does this work enter into economic calculations. And the wages paid to babysitters indicate the market value of this work. In 1980, according to unpublished census data, the average yearly income for female babysitters working year-round and mainly full-time was $5,683 (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984, p.92).

Many mothers do earn wages by working outside the home. As of 1984, 52% of mothers with a child under three, 57% of mothers with their youngest child aged three to five, and 64% of women with school-aged children were in the labour force. These figures represent, since 1976, increases of 62%, 39%, and 29% respectively (Task Force on Child Care, 1986, p.8).

Child care workers in licensed centres, almost all of whom are women, are paid much less than the average weekly industrial wage. They earn even less than workers who look after animals (Townson, 1986, p.17). The earnings of family home caregivers are even lower (see Chapter 2). The absence of monetary recognition for child care in a society that places so much value on money provides glaring evidence of the devaluation of women's work.

Due to a long struggle to gain pay equity, women who teach in elementary and secondary schools fare a lot better in their earning power than mothers or child care providers. In the early twentieth century, young women in teaching earned less than secretaries. They were paid on a different scale from men, who after all had to "keep a family." After the second war, women teachers finally earned the right to be paid at a rate equal to men; elementary teachers' pay scales became equal to those of secondary teachers, and the wages for teachers increased. Today, differences in the salaries of female and male elementary and secondary teachers rest not on their gender per se, but on their training and seniority. Women still have lower qualifications than men on the average, and they are much less likely to be in administrative positions.

In universities, comparisons of the salaries of men and women with similar degrees, academic rank, age, and fields of study show that women continue to earn less than their male counterparts (Symons & Page, 1984, p.194). Recent figures indicate that full-time female faculty earn, on average, 82 cents for every dollar earned by male faculty (Status of Women, December 1986, p.10). This is only partly because women are in lower ranks and in lower-paying faculties than men; partly it is also because women earn less than men in similar positions.

The question of the prestige of these three kinds of educational workers – teachers, child care workers, and mothers – is complex. On recent prestige scales, the occupation of housewife is in a lower category than registered nurse or teacher, but higher than most leading female occupations, such as typist or sales clerk. Being a housewife accords women some independent status, despite the negative association of being labelled " just a housewife." A housewife's prestige is, however, also tied to the status of her husband. The wife of a physician is accorded a much higher status than the wife of a plumber. In nearly all cases, nevertheless, such wives are seen to have a lower status than their husbands (Eichler, 1978).

The status of child care workers is related to that of mothering. Both suffer from the public disdain that exists for those who want to spend the day with young children (Biklen, 1985, p.215). This disdain is reflected in the lower prestige of elementary teachers relative to secondary teachers. Educational work that is largely carried out by women is caught up in the contradictory rhetoric of a child-centred society which devalues and underpays the care and raising of children (Lather, 1986). This work suffers from the cultural assumption that it is the proven and natural duty of women which, because it comes naturally to women, needs only minimal rewards.

Job Models Versus Gender Models

Because of the assumptions about women's work being in the home while children and men's work lies outside, the work experiences of men and women are interpreted differently by researchers. Women's functions are explained by their biology and their family, men's by their responsibilities, wages and working conditions.

In their review of the sociological literature on work, Feldberg and Glenn (1982) claim that "job models" are generally applied to understanding the behaviour of male workers while "gender models" are applied to female workers. Studies of male workers examine such job conditions as standardization, mechanization, and repetitiveness to explain low motivation or alienation. Studies examining female workers stress personality and family-related factors instead. For example, in a study of factory workers, Beynon and Blackburn (1972) assume that women's "low motivation " is related to their primary commitment to family roles, whereas men's "sociability" (which seems to be another term for low commitment) is related to alienating job conditions and lack of opportunities for mobility.

This standard can be seen in the analysis of teachers. To explain the low status of female relative to male teachers, researchers have implicitly adopted a "gender model." For example:

> A woman's primary attachment is to the family role; women are therefore less intrinsically committed to work than men and less likely to maintain a high level of specialized knowledge. Because their work motives are more utilitarian and less intrinsically task-oriented than those of men, they may require more control.(Simpson & Simpson, 1969, p.199)

Such an analysis blames women for their low status in the profession as well as for the low status of the profession as a whole. As Acker (1983, p.124) puts it, women teachers are portrayed as "damaging, deficient, distracted and sometimes dim."

These analyses ignore the possibility that women are confined to the devalued jobs of teaching younger rather than older children, and that they may have a different, but as strong, commitment to teaching as men. In her study of elementary school teachers, Biklen (1985) found that the women had a strong idealistic commitment to their work. They were more concerned about its content and their performance than with its usefulness to them for their personal upward mobility. Current conceptualizations of teaching as a career, Biklen concludes, tend to be based on " the clockwork of male careers."

Feldberg and Glenn's (1982) analysis also suggests the importance of looking at the job conditions of mothers. Oakley (1974, p.87) found that most of the housewives she talked to experienced more monotony, fragmentation, and speed in their work than do workers in the factory. The average working week of the women in her sample was 72 hours – almost twice as long as an average industrial working week (Oakley, 1974, p.93). With the development of such professions as medicine, psychology, and indeed, teaching, professional standards for child development techniques have been increasingly applied to mothering. One mother in Flin Flon eloquently summed up the contradictions of parenting: "I love them more than life itself and I wish they'd go away forever" (Luxton, 1980, p.87). The complex rewards and responsibilities of mothering have only begun to interest researchers (Storr, 1974; Luxton, 1980; Jackson, 1982; Armstrong & Armstrong, 1984). The Interpenetration of Spheres

Teachers, child care workers, and mothers share a concern for the well-being of children, but their relationships to each other are not characterized by simple cooperation. These are complex, shifting and strongly shaped by social class as well as by gender. Researchers have just begun to see these relationships from the point of view of women themselves, rather than through the eyes of the dominant institutions.

Research on the relationships between child care and mothers has been preoccupied with the consequences of child care for "culturally deprived" children, on the assumption that child care workers make up for the inadequacies of mothers, especially of poor mothers. Poor Canadian parents have used day care to help them look after their children from at least the 1850s. In most cases, day care was managed by voluntary philanthropic women's organizations. These nurseries not only provided child care but usually served also as employment agencies for mothers who sought domestic work. They offered minimum physical, emotional, and cognitive care and were primarily custodial rather than educational (Schulz, 1978). Today, child care is still associated with charity and welfare.

The state subsidizes care for only a small percentage of very low-income families (Schulz, 1982, p.125). But as Pence (1985) notes, higher maternal employment rates and a decline in the number of two-parent families have increased the demand for day care. Central to these transformations, he writes, is " the extension of the day care issue from its traditional child welfare focus on the need-of-the-few, to the 'Well Fare' of the majority of Canadian families with young children (p.236)." Child care has yet to attain the status of public schooling in which all children have the right to education.

Critics of day care pit the liberation of women against the welfare of children (e.g., Suransky, 1982, p.191). If women go to work outside the home, they assume children will suffer in substitute child care. There is no evidence for this; children sometimes gain, sometimes suffer, depending on the quality of care at home and in day care centres. We must rid ourselves of, as O'Connor (1984, p.163) puts it, "the always hovering ghost of 'mother,' who continues to reappear as the inevitable right answer." The "war" is not between women and their children but rather between women and children on the one hand, and social and economic structures that do not support quality child care at home or outside it. While the debate about government versus parental responsibility persists, the provision of child care suffers. In contrast to Canada, several European countries have already developed comprehensive child care policies based on the assumption of the shared responsibility of parents and society for children (Task Force on Child Care, 1986, Ch.12; Kamerman, 1979).

As David and New (1985) argue, public policy is too often directed toward the "revitalization" of the traditional and private family. They suggest that a major "renegotiation of work and family" should be the goal of government policy and they recommend a wide range of changes: the incorporation of men into child care at home and elsewhere; and the use of educational facilities as "community centres" that would combine nursery and primary schools.

The relationship of mothers and teachers has also been portrayed as antagonistic. Teaching has often been perceived as making up for inadequacies of the home – read "mother," especially poor mother. Research on the home-school relationship focuses on how families either facilitate or hinder their children's educational progress. The studies examine how the cultures of specific types of advantages that are taken for granted by the educational system (Craft, 1970; Keddie, 1974; Manicom, 1981). This research makes little reference to the work of mothers in its abstracted reference to "families." It is primarily concerned with a one-way relationship – how families affect the educational achievement of children. It blames mothers for any failures in their children, but takes their work for granted. It neglects to question how schools affect families, and more specifically, how they affect the work of mothers in the home.

This traditional examination of the family-school linkage is taken from the point of view of educators. It is approached from the standpoint of those who work within the educational system, not from that of mothers. It does not ask how women's work is shaped by schools; how child rearing is related to educational pedagogy; how both teaching and mothering are affected by changing educational resources; or how gender affects the work of teachers and mothers.

These are the kinds of questions that some feminists are beginning to ask (see, for example, Grumet, 1981; David, 1980, 1986; David & New, 1985; Jackson, 1982; Lather, 1986). Jackson (1982), for example, argues that as the school changes its practices and policies, and resources are cut back, new demands are placed on teachers and parents (in particular the mother). She writes:

> Two familiar developments in the school are noteworthy here. One is the movement toward more standardization of curriculum and evaluation, and increased accountability for classroom practices. The second is the reduction in the level of support services as a result of cutbacks in educational spending . . . Both of these policies result in increased demands on teachers. They also result in intensification, both directly and indirectly, of the demands on parents (p.23)

Mothers, child care workers and teachers are too often pitted against each other and blamed for each other's failings. Instead, we need to look at the structures that marginalize and devalue them all, making it difficult for them to care for children. Though children are often touted to be society's most valuable resource, the actual work of raising them is trivialized and poorly paid. But we also need to look at the rewards and opportunities these positions afford them. Though the positions of teaching, child care and mothering are devalued and subjected to the authority of men in a variety of ways within the present economic and cultural climate, they also offer opportunities for women.

The three contributors to this section address some of these issues. Danylewycz, Light and Prentice are concerned with trying to understand how the "feminization of teaching" emerged historically. As Prentice (1977) notes in an earlier article, the idea of a predominantly female elementary teaching force only gradually gained acceptance in British North America. By their careful analysis of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec during the formative period of public schooling from 1851 to 1881, these authors attempt to tease out the most important factors (e.g., rural poverty, the presence of a resource frontier, the traditional roles of women in the family, and the legacy of nuns in teaching) that explain how teaching became women's work.

Chapter 2 provides information on a neglected segment of female educational workers. It documents the education and training, earnings and working conditions, and rights and obligations of child providers. The *Report of the Task Force on Child Care*, of which it forms a part, argues for a system of child care and parental leave, recognizing the interrelationship of paid work outside the home and unpaid work with children within the home.

In Chapter 3, Griffith and Smith examine mothering as a work process. They consider the way that mothering is structured by schooling. In addition, they contribute to an ongoing debate concerning the development of feminist research methodologies. By developing the crucial insights of Smith's earlier works (1974, 1975, 1979), they aim to provide a sociology not *of*, but *for* women. They are critical of traditional, positivistic research that assumes that subjects can be treated as objects, and that researchers do not have a relationship with their subjects. Their concern is to understand mothering from the standpoint of the mothers themselves, and to take into account the social relations within which their work is embedded.

Notes

[1] The percentages of female elementary and secondary teachers are based on our computations, and on figures of 6 provinces (see Statistics Canada, 1987:22)

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1

The Evolution of the Sexual Division of Labour in Teaching: Nineteenth Century Ontario and Quebec Case Study[1]

Marta Danylewycz, *Beth Light* and *Alison Prentice*

Shortly after her marriage to a widower with four children in December of 1916, country school teacher Leila V. Middleton recorded the wedding and her hopes as a stepmother in her diary.

> I was married Wed. Dec. 27 and came to my new home Sat. evening after spending a few days in Toronto. I feel that I am taking on a big responsibility with four young step children. I hope my teaching experience of 5 years may be of help to me in doing for each what is best . . .[2]

In seeing teaching as appropriate preparation for her new role, Leila Middleton was expressing a commonly held view. It was a view that had developed out of the experience of thousands of North American women who, since the early decades of the nineteenth century, had spent the years between the end of their own schooling and marriage as mistresses of rural schools. It was a view that had been put forward by early promoters of women teachers, such as Catherine Beecher, and was also carefully nurtured by hundreds of school administrators, those makers of educational ideology for whom it was convenient that a labour pool of idealistic and uncomplaining young women should continue to fill poorly paid teaching posts in thousands of rural schools. The belief that teaching was an ideal preparation for motherhood was of course meant to apply to all female teachers, not just those living in the country. Urban women, persuaded that their role was to teach the youngest children in the graded schools of towns and cities, were also subject to such domestically oriented ideology.

For the many women teachers who did not marry, the mystique of the teacher-in-training for motherhood must have had a hollow ring and, because of them, there was another twist to the tale. To schoolmistresses of the nineteenth century who remained celibate, the mission of the school was less a preparation than a substitute for woman's divine calling in the home. For these women, teaching was held up as a vocation and was in fact often a lifetime career (Sklar, 1973; Burstyne, 1974; Riley, 1969; Melder, 1972).

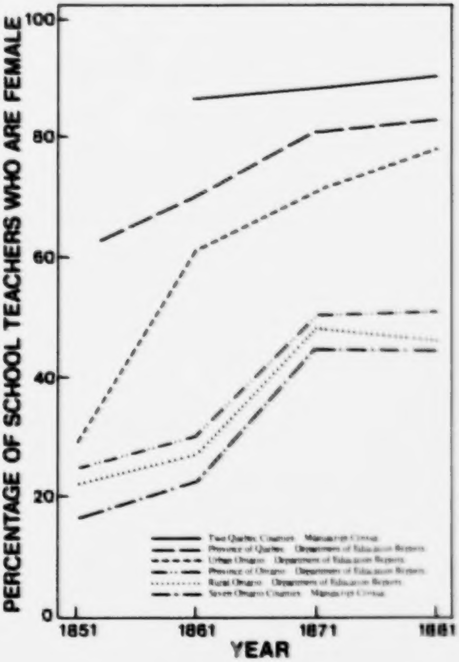
If women were seen to be either preparing for or playing a mothering role in the school room, the implied ideal role for the male teacher was that of the patriarchal father. Often a young man would use school teaching as a stepping stone to another more lucrative profession; if he stayed in teaching it was usually in the hope of exerting his natural authority as a principal, as a model school or high school teacher, or as an inspector or superintendent of schools.[3]

Historians investigating the history of teaching have been impressed with the extent to which these ideal constructs reflected reality. The vast majority of nineteenth and even twentieth century women teachers, like women employed in other occupations, have tended to leave their schools to become wives and mothers. On the other side of the coin, the proportionally fewer men who have been teachers since the development of public school systems have had better than average chances of progressing from the classroom to administrative jobs. School teaching has thus presented a classic case of the sexual division of labour. In general, women have held the lower paying jobs at the bottom of educational occupational ladders and men have been favoured at the top (Katz, 1968;p Tyack, 1967; Prentice, 1975; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack and Strober, 1981).

But to make such general statements is to talk only about the tip of the iceberg. Investigations of the movement into public school teaching have begun to reveal that there is a great deal hidden beneath the surface. Segregation by gender in school teaching, it turns out, is a far from simple or static fact. It is, rather, a complex phenomenon which has not only undergone important changes over time, but has manifested major regional and national variations as well.

A striking area of complexity and the one most thoroughly examined to date is the comparison between urban and rural teachers in the past. Focusing largely on the nineteenth century, studies of school systems have revealed that the larger schools of cities tended to spawn occupational hierarchies in teaching. In these schools, women teachers were segregated in lower paying positions as the instructors of the junior grades and men were slotted into higher paying positions as senior teachers, principals and superintendents. Where such urban hierarchies developed, the proportion of women teachers tended to be higher than average for the region or period in question (Graph 1). At the same time, the gap between male and female salaries tended to grow wider (Prentice, 1975: 12-13; Strober and Best, 1979).

In contrast, historians have noted, rural areas were generally slower to develop a segmented labour market in teaching. Although women teachers gradually became the majority in rural schools, male teachers held their own in the one-room rural school house well into the later years of the nineteenth century. Rural authorities worried about the ability of women teachers, particularly if they were young, to manage schools attended by young men and about the ability of women to "govern" children in general (Strober and Tyack, 1980: 497-98). In some rural regions young women may have been less available for school teaching because of the demand for domestic labour on the typical family farm (Strober and Tyack, 1980: 497).[4] Finally, it has been argued, rural society presented fewer alternative opportunities to young men and therefore teaching was likely to seem more attractive to rural males than it might have to their urban contemporaries (Strober and Tyack, 1980: 497). Whatever the reasons for the generally more equal numbers of male and female teachers in rural areas over a longer period in the nineteenth century than was the case for urban North America, this greater general equality in numbers was reflected both in wages and conditions. The gap between female and male salaries tended to be narrower than that found in cities. And because the job generally consisted in the management of a one-room school, the work experience of women and men who taught rural schools was more comparable than the contrasting roles usually played by male and female teachers in hierarchically organized urban schools (Strober and Best, 1979; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack and Strober, 1981).



Graph 1
Percentages of Female Teachers in Ontario and
Quebec 1851-1881.

This situation of relative equality did not last, however. Broad statistical studies, in this case dealing exclusively with the United States, are beginning to demonstrate how measures of formalization, such as a longer school year or a larger number of teachers per school, correlated with growing proportions of women teachers almost everywhere. Men, who had once combined teaching with farming in economies where women teachers were able to take the schools in the summer, appear to have been forced out of the occupation by the lengthening school year. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, continuing urbanization signalled increasing hierarchy, widening gaps between female and male wages, and more women in the occupation, presumably filling the lower ranks even in village schools where there were now three or four teachers instead of one. By the early twentieth century there was a clear sexual division of labour in rural as well as urban schools (Strober and Landford, 1981; Day and O'Connor, 1978).

Whether urban or rural, both nineteenth- and early twentieth-century female teachers emerge in most of the studies that have been done to date as malleable, commandable beings. Young and socialized to obedience in a patriarchal family setting, they were the ideal people to fill the growing number of jobs in schools that were increasingly governed by rules and regulations emanating from above, whether from immediate superiors such as principals and trustees, or from more distant authorities such as state or provincial departments of education. Male teachers, on the other hand, are portrayed as either the seekers of such authority for themselves or, in one case, as the only sex capable of fighting against bureaucratic authority and of promoting the professional status of their occupation (Labarree-Paulé, 1965; Strober and Tyack, 1980: 500; c.f. Tyack and Strober, 1981).[5]

If these are the stereotypes, it is also true that several studies stress the potential for development and affirmation of self that teaching offered for many nineteenth century North American women. As well, they stress the occasional connections that can be traced between teacher activism and nineteenth- and early twentieth-century feminism (Clifford, 1981). An examination of the relations between male and female teachers in France, moreover, has uncovered government legislation favouring the advancement of women over that of men teachers in the 1890s and the eventual emergence of a significant alliance between schoolmasters and schoolmistresses against what those allied saw as the enemy of correct republican education, the Roman Catholic Church (Meyers, 1980; Bryans, 1974).

Such studies clearly illustrate the importance of local or regional contexts in any examination of the evolution of sexual divisions of labour in teaching. They also suggest that if the historian looks at the sexual division of labour in schools from the perspective of the women teachers themselves, a complex picture, one that is neither completely positive nor completely negative, is likely to emerge.

The present study explores the evolution of a predominantly female workforce in teaching in the context of two regional political economies: those of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, during the period from 1851 to 1881. While the two Canadas[6] shared many characteristics with each other and with parts of the United States in the nineteenth century, they were also in some ways sharply contrasting societies. With its French population dating back to the beginnings of New France, Quebec was an established rural society, but a rural society with a difference. Wheat production insufficient to feed the growing population and a serious land shortage in the older colonized parishes and counties produced, by mid-century, a great migration of Quebec families to new lands in the north of the province and in eastern Ontario and, most noticeably perhaps, to the industrializing cities of New England. Quebec's largest city, Montreal, was also experiencing industrial development and the influx of large numbers of migrants, first from Ireland and then from its own rural hinterland. Last but not least, resource industries such as lumbering played an increasingly important role in the Quebec economy (Paquet and Wallot, 1975; McCallum, 1980; Séguin, 1977).

Ontario, by contrast, was a relatively new rural society. Indigenous populations in this province had first been joined by American landseekers and Loyalists following the American revolution; these were followed by those from the British Isles. Most immigrants lived primarily by farming, but lumbering also flourished in Ontario, especially in the Ottawa Valley, while commercial and some industrial development was making an important centre of the city of Toronto. Indeed, and apparently because of its later development and the marketing needs of its wheat economy, Ontario boasted quite a number of smaller urban centres, in contrast to Quebec where small towns were proportionally less numerous (McCallum, 1980). Materially, then, the two provinces differed in that Ontario had a more evenly spread urban network that Quebec had a longer history of farming and greater rural overcrowding, and, possibly, that the French province suffered greater rural poverty during much of the nineteenth century. The greatest cultural contrast between the two provinces, aside from the obvious difference in dominant languages, was the Roman Catholic character of Quebec by the third quarter of the nineteenth century compared with the increasingly Protestant identity of Ontario (Wallot, 1971; Linteau, et. al., 1979: 232-39, 517-25). All these contrasts lead to the first question addressed by this paper: How did the different economic, social and cultural settings of education in Quebec and Ontario affect the evolution of the sexual division of labour in teaching in the two provinces?

A second goal of the present study was to look more closely at rural patterns of development, for rural teaching patterns have been insufficiently studied. Like researchers elsewhere, we were convinced that the development of urban bureaucracies did not fully explain the eventual feminization of the occupation in the predominantly agricultural societies of North America. In addition to these concerns, we also realized that the province of Quebec and at least some Ontario counties did not fit very well into the general North American picture of shifting male/female ratios in teaching.

Indeed, the most cursory look at central Canadian educational statistics for the nineteenth century reveals two startling facts. The first is that in Ontario, although women teachers were clearly a minority overall until the 1870s, certain counties in the eastern part of the province favoured them much earlier.

Prescott, Stormont, Dundas, Russell and Grenville began to report female majorities to the Department of Education during the odd year in the early 1850s and, by the early 1860s, quite a few of the eastern counties were consistently reporting a majority of women teachers (Map 1). The second and more obvious fact is that Quebec women teachers outnumbered men in the province as a whole by mid-century. Moreover, one of the first complete sets of school inspectors' reports revealed that men in rural settings were no more likely than their counterparts living in urban centres like Montreal, Quebec City, and Sherbrooke to take up teaching as an occupation. Contrary to what historians have found to be the case in the United States at that time, the work of teaching in Quebec belonged to country as much as city women (Graph I and Table 1).

The point at which women became the majority of the teaching force in Quebec remains a mystery. Some historical accounts suggest they outnumbered men as early as the 1830s (Labarrere-Paulé, 1965: 93). Given the possibility that women in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Lower Canada may have been more literate than men, that at the time of the Conquest and following the banishment of male religious orders, girls' schools run by religious women or by laywomen trained in convent schools were more abundant than educational institutions for boys, women teachers may have been in the majority during much of French Canada's early history.[7] Whatever the early history of the sexual division of labour in Quebec, it is clear that by the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century self-conscious school promoters, who shared the educational philosophies of men like Ontario's Egerton Ryerson and Massachusett's Horace Mann, were concerned about what they thought was a new trend. Who taught school, how male and female teachers conducted themselves in the classroom, and what roles women and men were to play in the developing school systems were questions much pondered by the architects of public schooling in Quebec.

In this context, the growing presence of women teachers was noted and its causes and consequences studied. School inspectors and educational administrators remarked that the rapid multiplication of schools in the 1860s and 1870s, the ratepayers' opposition to high educational costs, and the school commissioners' policy of hiring the least expensive teachers ensured the dominance and eventual monopoly of teaching by women. Understanding the connection between the influx of women into teaching and the money saving policies of local school commissioners, school promoters realized that as long as custom and prescription dictated a lower pay scale for women and a qualitatively higher one for men, the flow of women could not be stemmed. They lamented the loss of male teachers, yet too few were prepared (or even able) to change that situation by equalizing the salaries of men and women.[8]

If the low price at which women teachers sold their services led to the virtual elimination of the schoolmaster, the popular practice among the agricultural and working classes of removing boys from school at a younger age than girls also favoured the proportional increase of women in teaching. Girls were

Table 1
Percentages of Female Teachers in
Inspectoral Districts of Quebec, 1853

Inspector	District	Female Teachers	Male Teachers	Female
M. Lanctot	Huntingdon, Beauharnois	84	48	63.6
M. Child	Stanstead, Sherbrooke, Drummond	185	48	79.4
F. Hubert	St. Maurice, Champlain	53	36	59.6
W.A. Adamson	City of Quebec (Protestant)	2	2	50.0
J.H. Morin	Saguenay	2	1	66.7
J.G. Lespérance	Gaspé	2	1	66.7
J. Crepault	Bellechasse, L'Islet	88	23	79.3
C. Germain	Terrebonne, Two Mountains	70	47	59.8
G. Tanguay	Kamouraska, Rimouski	107	28	79.3
J.N.A. Archambault	Chamably, Vercheres, Richilieu	83	45	64.8
R. Parmelee	Missisquoi, Rouville, Shefford, Stanstead	117	56	67.6
F.X. Valade	Montreal, Vaudreuil	67	57	54.0
P.M. Bardy	Portneuf, Quebec, Montmorency	57	56	50.4
A.P.J. Consigny	St. Hyacinth, Rouville	82	40	67.2
B. Maurault	Yamaska, Nicolet	73	14	83.9
P.F. Béland	Dorchester, Lotbiniere	166	37	81.8
G.A. Bourgeois	Drummond	8	6	57.1
J. Bruce	Beauharnois, Two Mountains	52	82	38.8
C. Chagnon	Leinster, Berthier	54	68	44.3
C. Cimon	Saguenay	12	15	44.5
W. Hume	Dorchester, Bellechasse, Mégantic	11	19	36.7
B.F. Painchaud	Gaspé	0	4	0.0
P. Winter	Bonaventure, Gaspé	4	34	10.5
J.J. Roney	Ottawa	25	41	31.8
Totals		1404	808	63.5

Source: Report of the Superintendent of Education for Lower Canada for 1853.

allowed to remain in school longer, inspectors noted, because parents and employers placed a higher value on the work of young men. Sons were expected to set books aside and to help with the intensive work of farming and lumbering. Girls presumably could spend many of their days in school and still help with the household chores in the late afternoons and evenings. One school inspector contrasted the practice of withdrawing sons from school to the encouragement given by parents to their daughters as follows: "Nothing," he wrote, "is neglected as far as the girls are concerned; they are even sent to the superior schools. . . ."[9]

While our second concern, then, was to explore this very early development of predominantly female teaching forces in eastern Ontario and in Quebec, our third goal evolved from the decision to use the manuscript census as a source. Scrutinized for the years 1851 to 1881 for Ontario, and 1861 to 1881 for Quebec, the manuscript census permitted us to examine such variables as the ethnicity of Canadian female and male teachers, their ages, their household and their marital status over time. We wanted to know how these variables affected the evolution of the sexual division of labour in the schools.[10]

Before examining these questions, it is important to recognize that statistical information on Ontario and Quebec before the middle of the nineteenth century is minimal. The result is that we are left somewhat in the dark about divisions of labour in teaching prior to the full-scale emergence of state supported school systems, a situation that makes it easy to blur the origins of the phenomenon we are studying. It would be of considerable interest to know more about male/female ratios in the traditional, "non-public" schools that existed before the development of a sexual division of labour in state supported schools. Of equal interest is the extent of formalization that was to be found in the common and parish schools of mid-century. Were the high proportions of women teachers in Quebec or the counties of eastern Ontario related to longer school years and larger schools, as suggested in American studies, or were the causes more likely to be found in a tradition of women in teaching and the particular exigencies of regional economies, as school inspectors of the time seemed to believe?

Certainly, in central Canada, as in other parts of North America, state involvement in schooling altered the character of the schools. Although this involvement began early in the nineteenth century in both Ontario and Quebec, government financial assistance to schools was minimal until the 1840s and it is unclear how effective or uniform early attempts at government intervention in the conduct of schools may have been. Ontario studies have suggested, in fact, that even in the 1840s and 1850s government controls were slow to take hold (Gidney and Lawr, 1978: esp. 178-79). And, if in Ontario a tax-supported system of public, primary schooling had by 1871 largely replaced the voluntaristic and predominantly domestic schooling that had prevailed earlier, in Quebec the move from private and locally oriented education to genuinely state-controlled schools seems to have proceeded more slowly (Audet, 1971). Considerable resistance to government interference in education existed in both provinces.

The resistance produced a wave of rural school burnings and riots at mid-century in Quebec.[11] In eastern Ontario the protest was less violent but not necessarily less pervasive. Take, for example, the county of Prescott where women teachers early became a majority. Stretched along the Ottawa River and settled by British immigrants who at mid-century were being joined by migrants from Quebec, Prescott was far removed both physically and psychologically from the centre of Ontario's educational power in Toronto. The length of the school year in Prescott seems to have been average for Ontario, wavering between 9 months and 8 days and 9 months and 29 days, in the early 1850s. Therefore, a long school year preventing men from combining teaching with farming cannot be the explanation for the early feminisation of teaching in Prescott. Nor did the other counties, where 45 percent or more of the teachers in any given year were women, deviate greatly from the Ontario average in the length of their school years. Their significant common characteristic seems simply to have been distance from the metropolis, rather than any high level of formalization in the conduct or organization of their schools.[12]

It is more fruitful to look for common features uniting these counties of eastern Ontario with rural Quebec. Immediately apparent is the fact that in both regions there was considerable rural poverty. If farm families were having to leave many parts of Quebec at mid-century, settlers were just beginning to come into many parts of eastern Ontario. Surplus cash to pay school taxes and hence to supplement provincial funds to remunerate teachers was not readily available. Eastern Ontario school superintendents reported that the bush was just being cleared, that both people and schools were widely scattered and, finally, that trustees were simply "unwilling" to pay salaries sufficient to attract a "better class" of teachers into the schools. In 1855 the problems of poverty and lack of interest were outlined with particular clarity in the report on the Prescott township of Alfred.

> All the teachers in the township are young girls under eighteen years of age, as none other would teach for the salaries that the trustees are able to pay them, on account of the difficulty of collecting, or rather the disinclination of paying, local rates.[13]

The disinclination was clearly shared by the rioting farmers and school burners of Quebec.

In 1850, a teacher from Russell County analyzed the problems of poverty and poor salaries in the Canadas in an irate letter to Ontario's Chief Superintendent of Schools. No wonder there were riots in Lower Canada, James Breakenridge complained. The government grants to teachers were paltry and local trustees endured endless trouble to procure it, including journeys of up to sixty miles. Far from assisting local teachers to do better, the new "school machinery," it would appear from Breakenridge's account, was little more than an irritant in poor and thinly settled regions.[14]

Evidence that poverty was at the root of such troubles and the cause of many cases of hiring women school teachers is to be found in Education

Department statistics on school building materials. The relative prosperity of some Ontario counties was made manifest in these statistics by the high proportions of schools that were of frame construction or were built of brick or stone. With the single exception of Lennox, the eastern counties showing high proportions of female teachers in the early 1850s indicated their poverty by reporting higher than average proportions of log school houses, compared to the province as a whole.[15]

If poverty was the major characteristic shared by many eastern Ontario counties and parts of the province of Quebec, another was the presence of the "resource frontier." As John Abbott and Charles Gaffield have argued for turn of the century Algoma and mid-nineteenth century Prescott County, respectively, resource frontier economies were similar in their attitudes to schooling (Abbott, 1983; Gaffield, 1978). In places like Prescott, Russell or Stormont and in many Quebec counties, especially in the northeast, lumbering was an important industry attracting large numbers of young men into the bush during the winter season, when in other places, they might have been available to teach. Thus, it seems male unavailability was, at least in part, responsible for female predominance in teaching in these regions.

What we are proposing essentially is a third and possibly a fourth model of the sexual division of labour in teaching. To the early urban pattern, in which women teachers quickly filled the lower ranks of expanding city school systems, and the later rural pattern, where high proportions of women teachers were related to a gradually increasing formalisation and to the repetition of urban patterns on a smaller scale, we would add an early rural model of the sexual division of labour in teaching, which was characteristic of troubled agricultural regions and the resource frontier. In this model, poverty and the presence of industries such as lumbering, calling young men into the bush rather than the school, combined to produce a majority of women teachers almost from the beginning of the introduction of public schooling.

Our fourth model is suggested by the special characteristics of Quebec. We would argue that a factor that affected the early sexual division of labour in teaching in French Canada, and may also have had an impact elsewhere, was the presence of an important tradition of women in teaching *prior* to the emergence of government supported schooling. This tradition dates back to the involvement of nuns in education since the founding of New France; it may also have been related to the sexual division of labour in the rural household economies, as described by the nineteenth century school inspectors. The rapid growth of women's teaching religious orders in the second half of the nineteenth century merely strengthened the female presence in education (Danylewycz, 1981).

In Ontario, the counties of Northumberland, Ontario and Oxford, Dundas and Essex, and Prescott and Grey were chosen for intensive study using the manuscript census.[16] The growing proportion of female teachers[17] recorded in the census for the seven counties follows the basic pattern for Ontario, but at a slower pace (Graph 1). From the Department of Public Instruction annual reports, we see in 1851 a higher proportion of women teachers for the province as a whole (25.2%) and for rural Ontario (21.8%) compared to the average for the seven counties of 16.1% derived from the manuscript census. But this is to be expected given the apparent underenumeration of female teachers in the early census reports, a phenomenon probably resulting from the fact that the 1851 and 1861 censuses were taken in the wintertime, a season during which fewer women taught.[18] In 1861, the Ontario rural average indicated by the Department of Public Instruction annual reports was still generally higher than the seven counties' average derived from the manuscript census, but the two averages were much closer to each other. If we examine the counties individually, the education records for 1861 also reveal the diversity of the seven counties, with Prescott reporting, as it had several times in the 1850s, a majority of female teachers; Dundas, Northumberland and Essex repeated the pattern of the early 1850s of between 25% and 49.9% women; by contrast Oxford and Ontario actually dropped to join Grey County with fewer than 25% of all teachers female (Map 1).

What does the manuscript census reveal about teachers in the seven counties considered as a group? Certainly one of the most significant revelations is the important difference between male and female teachers, between 1851 and 1881, in terms of age (Table 2). While in every decade there were some adolescent males teaching in the seven counties, they never comprised more than 12% of all male teachers and, in the first three census years studied, fewer than 10% of the male teachers were under 20 years of age. Most schoolmasters were between 20 and 29, especially in 1871 and 1881, but male teachers who were 30 and over were also an important category.

Women, in contrast, were young, Indeed, 52.4% of the women were under 25 years of age in 1851, compared to only 27.7% of the men. Although male teachers in the under 25 age group increased to 35.4% in the following decade, the women in this group had by then jumped to 67.4% of all women teachers. The percentages for women under 25 stabilized at approximately 70% during the next two census years; but by 1881, although their numbers and proportion had increased, men under 25 were still only 46.4% of all male teachers. The shift, then, for both men and women teaching in the seven counties was towards a younger age. But in all census decades, the women were on the average much younger than the men.

This seems an important contrast, given the greater equality between nineteenth century female and male rural teachers in terms of numbers, conditions of employment and wages, that has been emphasized in existing studies. If the four decades are averaged, over half of all male teachers were 25 and older between 1851 and 1881, whereas only about 37% of the women were in this older group. Still, the very presence of older women in teaching is important. Although both their numbers and relative proportions in the seven counties were much smaller than those for men, there clearly were some "career" teach-

Table 2
Cases of Common School Teachers
Seven Ontario Counties, 1851-1881

		Female Teachers		Male Teachers	
		No.	%	No.	%
1851	19 & under	5	11.9	10	4.6
	20-24	17	40.5	50	23.1
	25-29	11	26.2	47	21.8
	30 & over	9	21.4	109	50.5
	Total	42	100.0	216	100.0
1861	19 & under	34	27.6	33	7.7
	20-24	49	39.8	119	27.7
	25-29	13	10.6	101	23.5
	30 & over	27	22.0	177	41.2
	Total	123	100.0	430	100.0
1871	19 & uncer	74	24.3	28	7.5
	20-24	144	47.4	107	28.6
	25-29	39	12.8	77	20.6
	30 & over	47	15.5	162	43.3
	Total	100.0	374	100.0	
1881	19 & under	116	25.1	70	12.0
	20-24	204	44.2	201	34.4
	25-29	78	16.9	102	17.5
	30 & over	64	13.9	211	36.1
	Total	462	100.0	584	100.0

ers among the rural women in the four census decades. At least a few of the women teachers in the 25-and older category had avoided the typical pattern of only three or four years of school teaching followed by marriage and withdrawal from the public labour force. Such women occasionally surface in literary records as well. Catherine Carter, nee Plantz, of Dundas County, taught from the age of 14 (or 15) to the age of 35 before she withdrew from teaching in 1872 to marry (Harkness, 1946; Carter, 1905: 128).[19]

If female teachers tended to be younger than male teachers in the seven counties, they also tended to be more often Ontario born than their male counterparts (Table 3). It is true that this was largely a reflection of their age. The younger the teacher of either sex in Ontario during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the more likely she or he was to have been born in the province. Or, to put it another way, the tendency of male teachers to be non-Ontario born was related to their greater average age. Yet a glance at the pro-

Table 3
Place of Birth of Common School Teachers
Seven Ontario Counties, 1851-1881

		Female Teachers		Male Teachers		County	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1851	Ontario	25	59.5	59	26.9	80,995	54.4
	Quebec	1	2.4	4	1.8	10,261	6.9
	England	2	4.8	43	19.6	13,890	9.3
	Scotland	1	2.4	31	14.2	13,718	9.2
	Ireland	6	14.3	58	26.5	19,387	13.0
	Other	7	16.7	24	11.0	10,524	7.1
	Total	42	100.0	219	100.0	148,775	99.9
1861	Ontario	78	62.9	168	38.7	139,261	61.7
	Quebec	2	1.6	8	1.8	11,119	4.9
	England	9	7.3	51	11.8	19,362	8.6
	Scotland	7	5.6	89	20.5	17,860	7.9
	Ireland	17	13.7	91	21.0	23,016	10.2
	Other	11	8.9	27	6.2	15,041	6.7
	Total	124	100.0	434	100.0	225,659	100.0
1871	Ontario	221	72.5	178	47.8	185,250	70.8
	Quebec	10	3.3	9	2.4	8,806	3.4
	England	19	6.2	41	11.0	18,968	7.2
	Scotland	18	5.9	57	15.3	16,264	6.2
	Ireland	20	6.6	60	16.3	19,184	7.3
	Other	17	5.6	27	7.3	13,257	5.1
	Total	305	100.1	372	100.1	261,729	100.0
1881	Ontario	398	86.1	419	71.7	229,451	75.8
	Quebec	17	3.7	19	3.3	11,251	3.7
	England	10	2.2	47	8.0	19,420	6.4
	Scotland	14	3.0	41	7.0	13,574	4.5
	Ireland	10	2.2	39	6.7	16,045	5.3
	Other	13	2.8	19	3.3	12,991	4.3
	Total	462	100.0	584	100.0	302,732	100.0

portions of Ontario and non-Ontario born among male and female teachers in 1881 suggests that the situation gradually shifted. Whereas in previous census decades, the proportions of Ontario born women teachers approximated their proportions in the general seven counties population, in 1881 fully 86.1% of school mistresses had been born in Ontario, compared to only 75.8% of the population at large.[20] By this time male teachers, were slightly younger than in previous census decades and were still clearly a good deal older on the average than the women, but were now very close, as far as birth place was concerned, to the seven counties average. It may thus be that the age of the male teachers was now more typical of the general population.

Whatever the relationship between age and place of birth, the over-representation of the non-Ontario born among male teachers is suggestive. It seems entirely possible that the existence of a pool of older, immigrant men, who were willing and able to teach, may well have played an important role in rural Ontario's resistance to the trend towards predominantly female teaching forces. As immigrants, they probably had special needs for cash to subsidize the purchase of farms or to supplement farm incomes, and/or fewer opportunities or skills for employment in other fields, so they may have been available for teaching when their Ontario-born counterparts were not.

Statistics on the marital status of teachers support the picture we have already drawn of a rural teaching force in which women tended to be younger than men. Women teachers in the seven counties, predominantly single in 1851 (78%), were overwhelmingly so by 1881 (95%). The percentages for male teachers show a slight movement away from the married state, especially between 1871 and 1881 (from 46% to 36%), when the downward shift in age was also clearly in evidence. But overall, rural schoolmasters tended to be married for more often than rural schoolmistresses.

Naturally enough, the household status of the teachers in the seven counties reflected these facts (Table 4). Not all married male teachers were heads of households,[21] but most were, the proportions fluctuating between 36 and 44 percent of all male teachers over the period. Female household heads corresponded fairly closely to the number of widows in each census decade, although the correspondence is not exact, suggesting that a few single women teachers were also heads of their own households in these rural counties during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Even more interesting than the findings on heads of households is the fact that the number of teachers identifiable as boarders, relatives, or children was far from stable, proportional to all teachers, in the period between 1851 and 1881. For both sexes, the boarder/relative category[22] was reduced by almost one half; a corresponding increase took place in the proportion of teachers who were children living in their parents' households. This shift was especially pronounced among women teachers because so many of them were young. By

Table 4

Household Status of Common School Teachers 1851-1881

		Female Teachers		Male Teachers	
		No.	%	No.	%
1851	Head	5	12.2	92	42.2
	Boarder or Relative	17	41.5	91	41.9
	Child	13	31.7	34	15.7
	Other	6	14.6	0	0.0
	Total	41	100.0	217	100.0
1861	Head	8	6.6	159	36.6
	Boarder or Relative	70	57.8	191	44.0
	Child	33	27.3	74	17.0
	Other	10	8.3	10	2.3
	Total	121	100.0	434	99.9
1871	Head	13	4.2	164	44.3
	Boarder or Relative	79	25.8	81	21.9
	Child	207	67.6	124	33.5
	Other	7	2.3	1	0.3
	Total	306	99.9	370	100.0
1881	Head	15	3.2	216	37.1
	Boarder or Relative	118	25.5	121	20.8
	Child	325	70.2	245	42.1
	Other	5	1.1	0	0.0
	Total	465	100.0	582	100.0

1881, over 70% of all female teachers in the seven counties were daughters living at home with their parents.

This trend may have reflected a shift away from boarding among young people generally. Certainly such a change has been noted for Hamilton, Ontario, during the same census decades (Katz, 1975: 276, 280). But it is also true that a vigorous campaign was conducted by mid-nineteenth century education authorities against teachers boarding out in the homes of others. Anxious to promote an image of teachers as stable and settled members of their communities, Department of Public Instruction officials and professionally oriented teachers heaped scorn on the boarding teacher who moved "from house to house like a beggar."[23] What they put forward as the ideal, however, were mature schoolmasters with households of their own, not the youthful daughters, or even the sons, of local farmers (Prentice, 1975: 7-11).

What was happening is revealed even more clearly when household heads, sons, daughters and boarders or relatives are considered as percentages of all teachers. If the proportion of heads of households remained stable as far as male teachers as a group were concerned, they declined sharply from 35.7 to 20.6 percent of all teachers by 1881, while sons increased from 13.2 to 23.4 percent. But it was daughters who made the larger leap, from a mere 5 to 31 percent of the total teaching force by the end of our period. Interestingly, the major part of the decline in boarding took place among the men teachers. In sum, women (and to some extent men) living at home with their parents were replacing both male household heads and male boarders among rural Ontario teachers. Looking at age in terms of all teachers is equally revealing. Women were increasing in all categories, but the women teachers who were under 30 years of age grew from 12.8 to 38.1 percent of all teachers. At the same time, schoolmasters who were 30 and older declined from almost one half (42.3 percent) to one fifth (20.2 percent) of the teaching force in the seven counties between 1851 and 1881.

If in Ontario important shifts in the age structure, ethnicity and household status of teachers accompanied the change in elementary school teaching from a male to an increasingly female occupation, in Quebec the combined effect of elementary school expansion and preferential hiring, the availability of other work for men, and the greater tendency of boys to leave school at a very early age had already created an essentially female teaching force by the middle of the nineteenth century. The disappearance of the schoolmaster in Quebec, however, proceeded at an uneven pace. In the period studied, some regions never had more than one or two male teachers, in others 30 to 40 percent of the teaching force was male, and in still others the numbers of men teachers fluctuated between a handful to a significant minority of the educating corps. In order to explore these variations, we selected two rural counties, Montmagny and Terrebonne, for detailed study for the years 1861, 1871 and 1881.[24]

The inspectoral districts in which the counties of Montmagny and Terrebonne were located registered a majority of women teachers in 1853 (Table 1). In fact, the percentages of schoolmistresses in these two districts in 1853 and in the two counties over the three census decades were slightly higher than the provincial average. By 1881, 84 and 99 percent of the teachers in Terrebonne and Montmagny, respectively, were women. Provincially, men had a slightly better showing; they were 16.7 percent of the teaching force in the province during that year. Even more striking is that of the few men who were teaching in the two rural counties, a great many were members of religious orders (Table 5). The lack of interest in teaching among laymen in rural Quebec is clearly illustrated by, as in Ontario, in the substantial proportion of the male teachers who were foreign born. Of the laymen engaged in teaching in Terrebonne and Montmagny in 1861, 1871 and 1881, nearly one third, or 31 percent, had migrated from either Scotland or Ireland to Quebec, most probably during the great migrations of the 1840s and 1850s.[25]

Table 5

Teachers by Gender and Vocational Identity, 1861-1881

	Lay Teachers	Teaching Brothers	Total	Male Teachers as a % of All Teachers	Lay Teachers	Teaching Sisters	Total	Female Teachers as a % of All Teachers
1861:								
Montmagny	3	4	7	8.1	34	7	41	91.9
Terrebonne	10	0	10	15.4	55	9	64	84.6
1871:								
Montmagny	3	5	8	6.3	45	6	51	93.7
Terrebonne	8	0	8	13.6	51	17	68	86.4
1881:								
Montmagny	1	0	1	1.8	55	9	64	98.2
Terrebonne	9	6	15	12.3	64	17	81	87.7

Although Terrebonne and Montmagny were similar in having few male teachers and a high proportion of foreign born among males, the differences between the two counties in the proportions of male and female teachers suggest the usefulness of examining them more closely. What factors could account for the more rapid feminization of Montmagny, compared to Terrebonne, and by 1881, the almost complete absence of male teachers in the former?

Enclosed by the St. Lawrence River on one side and the State of Maine on the other, Montmagny borders L'Islet County which leads to the Gaspé peninsula. To the east, the county of Bellechase stands between Montmagny and Quebec City. Although the land in Montmagny is exceptionally fertile and was plentiful in the period studied, farming was not necessarily the major and only occupation of its male inhabitants. Large numbers of men travelled annually to the Gaspé or across the river to Saguenay and Lac St. Jean where the likelihood of finding adventure and making money was much greater than in the sedentary and low-paying occupation of teaching.[26] Terrebonne, on the other hand, is in the plain of Montreal north of the city. But unlike most of the counties surrounding the city of Montreal, it did not suffer economic stagnation and population loss during the second half of the nineteenth century. With the extension of the railway, Terrebonne became a way station for pioneering men and women hoping to establish themselves in the uncolonized land of the Laurentians. At the same time, the prospering saw and grist mills in several of the county's villages attracted new settlers and further development. Most important was St. Jerome. In the late 1870s developers and entrepreneurs enticed by the promise of government subsidies and tax cuts flocked to this village and transformed it into a booming industrial town (Blanchard, 1953; Auclair, 1934).

In Montmagny, the presence of the resource frontier likely helped to deflect men from school teaching and to reinforce the traditional female involvement in popular education. Men in Terrebonne, on the other hand, were less prone to leave the farm and less likely to spend long periods in the bush or at sea fishing and for that reason were more likely than in Montmagny to be engaged in teaching.[27]

Of equal interest are the differences between the two counties in terms of religious and lay teachers, and, specifically, in the context of the growing numbers of people from religious orders engaged in teaching in the province as a whole during the second half of the nineteenth century. Provincially, the proportions of teaching brothers and sisters grew from 11 percent of the entire teaching force in 1853 to 22 percent in 1874 (Labarree-Paulé, 1965: 179, 300), and in Terrebonne the percentage of religious teachers grew from 12 to 24 percent between 1861 and 1881. In Montmagny, however, the exact opposite occurred. Religious men and women declined in strength in the twenty-year period from 23 to 14 percent, a shift indicating that lay women were solely responsible for the rise in the number of teachers in the county (Table 5).

The decreasing importance of the religious teacher in Montmagny is significant and suggestive. It makes clear yet another peculiarity in the evolution of the teaching force in late nineteenth century Quebec. While the number of religious teachers increased with each decade, the presence of the teaching brothers and sisters was not equally felt in the province. As the figures in the aggregate census and the histories of the Catholic Church show, the most rapid expansion in religiously run schools and the most impressive rise in the number of religious teachers took place in the Montreal region during the third quarter of the nineteenth century (Denault, 1975: 77-78). At that time counties outside the Montreal plain and especially those further in the hinterland remained almost immune to the expansion of religiously administered schooling.

In addition to representing the varying degrees of religious involvement in education, the differences between Terrebonne and Montmagny bring to light an important variation in the evolution of occupational hierarchies during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. If in many places in North America the proportion of women teachers tended to be higher where the teaching force was hierarchically structured, in Quebec the number of women was the greatest in the areas *least* likely to take on the appearance of a bureaucratized and industrialized society. Furthermore, the category that grew most vigorously in strength and size in the centres where urban-type hierarchies were taking form was that of the religious teacher.

The clustering of religious men and women in the most advanced and centrally located regions of the province shows clearly in the location and structure of educational institutions in Montmagny and Terrebonne. Religious brothers and sisters taught only in villages that were easily accessible by train or ferry and showed promise of economic prosperity. In function and structure, their schools were the predecessors of modern educational institutions: two to three storeys high, built of brick, graded and serving a student body of about two hundred. Teaching in the one room schools that were scattered throughout Terrebonne and Montmagny was not the fate of nuns, but of lay school mistresses.[28] They were the missionaries of public schooling to the rural hinterland and, like most missionaries, were subjected to harsh and often unbearable conditions of work. The lowest paid category of the teaching force, rural school mistresses (for whom the school often doubled as a home) found little material or psychological compensation for the work they performed. Yet their numbers continued to grow and, ironically enough, the more of them there were the less able they seemed to better their conditions of work (Douville-Veillet, 1973; Dorion, 1979: 229-70).

The rise of the one room school and the increasing tendency of teachers to reside in their place of work are reflected in the changing household status of women teachers. As in the seven Ontario counties, the number of teachers who boarded with strangers or relatives outside the nuclear family dropped between 1861 and 1881 from 29 to 13 percent in Montmagny and from 27 to 11 percent in Terrebonne. But in contrast to Ontario where with the passing of each decade increasing numbers of men and women teachers remained with their parents while working, the gradual disappearance of the boarding teacher went hand in hand with an impressive rise in the percentage of teaching women living alone as heads of households in schoolhouses. Indeed, by 1881 in Terrebonne and Montmagny 44% and 33% of the women teachers, respectively, belonged to this category (Table 6).

It may be that the persistence of the linear mode of land settlement, a pattern dating from the earliest days of colonization, played an important role in the proliferation of one room schools (Deffontaines, 1964: 3-19). Contrary to the hopes of school inspectors and other high ranking educational officials, who called for greater centralization, the French Canadian pattern of rural settlement dictated that the one room school would be an enduring feature of the rural educational landscape. And an enduring feature of this school was that it was not only taught but often inhabited by its schoolmistress.

The shift from the teacher as boarder to the teacher as dweller of a schoolhouse took place at the same time as the running of schools became more the

Table 6
Household Status of Lay Teachers, 1861-1881

	Montmagny				Terrebonne			
	Female Teachers		Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Male Teachers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1861:								
Head[1]	2	5.9	1	33.3	0	0.0	2	20.0
Schoolhouse Occupant[2]	3	8.8	1	33.3	14	25.5	5	50.0
Spouse	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0
Child	12	35.3	0	0.0	19	34.5	2	20.0
Relative[3]	7	20.6	0	0.0	5	9.1	1	10.0
Boarder	10	29.4	1	33.3	15	27.3	0	0.0
	34	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	10	100.0
1871:								
Head	1	2.2	1	33.3	2	3.9	0	0.0
Schoolhouse Occupant	20	44.4	1	33.3	27	52.9	5	62.5
Spouse	2	4.4	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0
Child	16	35.6	0	0.0	11	21.6	1	12.5
Relative	3	6.7	1	33.3	3	5.9	0	25.5
Boarder	3	6.7	0	0.0	7	13.7	2	25.5
	45	100.0	3	100.0	51	100.0	8	100.0
1881:								
Head	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Schoolhouse Occupant	18	32.7	0	0.0	28	43.8	5	55.6
Spouse	3	5.5	0	0.0	3	4.7	0	0.0
Child	14	25.5	0	0.0	24	37.5	1	11.1
Relative	13	23.6	0	0.0	2	3.1	0	0.0
Boarder	7	12.7	0	0.0	7	10.9	3	33.3
	55	100.0	1	100.0	64	100.0	9	100.0

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[1] Head designates head of household and family.

[2] Schoolhouse dweller includes teachers living in the household and residing alone or with a dependent (younger sibling, or assistant teacher). In most cases, however, the teacher was listed in the census as the only resident.

[3] Relative indicates sibling or grandchild.

work of the "professional" teacher and less a family enterprise. In 1861 in Montmagny and Terrebonne 27% of the teachers worked in pairs with a brother or sister. Twenty years later only 14% taught with one of their siblings. The formalization of teaching, the "intervention" of boards of examiners and normal schools in the process of educating educators, raised the standards in the profession and the schools. By the same token, this process lowered the level of family input in the preparation of teachers. No doubt the family unit still played an important role in influencing the career choices of its members. Its involvement, however, was no longer as direct as it might have been earlier in the passing along of classroom management skills (Katz, 1976).

If indeed the formalization of teacher training was responsible for the lower rate of members of the same family pursuing the same trade, this might also help to explain the evident aging of the teaching force in Terrebonne and Montmagny. Schoolmistresses in these two counties were actually older by the end of the third quarter of the century,[29] resembling by 1881 the average age of female teachers in the seven counties of Ontario (Tables 7 and 2).

The changes we have noted in the gender, age, ethnicity, household status, and lay or religious identity of Ontario and Quebec teachers make clear the inadequacy of existing models of the sexual division of labour in nineteenth century teaching. Not only must these models be refined in order to explain the manifold short-term and regional variations lying beneath the surface or even on the periphery of long-term trends, alternate ones must also be developed that are appropriate to the peculiar evolution of the teaching force in Quebec and parts of Ontario.

In most regions of central Canada, urban hierarchies among teachers and many other aspects of formalization were hardly to be found in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Instead, in some of these regions, factors such as poverty, the presence of a resource frontier, the traditional roles of women in the family and the legacy of nuns in teaching, appear to have encouraged a remarkably early sexual division of labour in rural schools.

In some regions of the two provinces, moreover, the sexual division of labour in rural teaching occurred side by side with other developments which must have had a profound effect on this transformation. In Ontario, rural teachers were slightly younger as the decades wore on and tended increasingly to be single women. Teachers who were boarders tended to be replaced during the third quarter of the nineteenth century by the daughters of local farmers who lived at home with their parents. In both provinces, a disproportionate number of male rural teachers were foreign born, suggesting that, to the extent that school authorities found men who were willing to teach, they were able to do so only because of a pool of potential candidates among immigrants. In Quebec, the increasing feminization of an already predominantly female rural teaching force was accompanied by the gradual clericalization of that teaching force. Religious teachers favoured the wealthier, more densely settled regions of the province, leaving the one room school houses in the poorer and more remote parishes to lay teachers. More and more often, in fact, the lay women teachers of the counties of Terrebonne and Montmagny were not only teaching but living in the school houses of their villages. If fewer siblings were to be found teaching in 1881 than was the case in 1861 when several female teachers to a family were not uncommon, it is also true that the average age of women teachers in Montmagny and Terrebonne was increasing.

It is difficult to generalize about what this may have meant to the women whose work rural school teaching became. For many, teaching may have provided an opportunity for relative independence and self-development. Certainly those teachers whose careers spanned a decade or more and the average ages of women teachers and biographical data suggest that these women were far from rare and must have become figures of some authority in their local communities. For the Leila Middletons who married after several years in the school room, teaching evidently provided useful experience in child management, as well as a period of relative autonomy between their own schooling and the beginning of married life.

But rural teaching also had its dark side. Many young women who taught school for a few years were making vital contributions to the support of their families and controlled little or nothing of their meagre wages. From Quebec sources documenting the lives of individuals who both taught and lived in remote and isolated school houses, we learn that teaching could be not only an impoverished existence, but a lonely and even frightening one (Douville-Veillet, 1973; Dorion, 1979). For such women, the burden of their position may well have outweighed the potential for growth described above. Poor pay was clearly common to all rural women teachers. Low status, dependency and isolation were also the lot of many of those who presided over rural school rooms during the period when country teaching was "women's work."

Notes

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[1] We wish to thank Chad Gaffield, Bob Gidney, Michael Katz and Paul Mattingly for probing criticisms of earlier Prentice papers on the history of teachers, and Mary Katzenstein, Karen Skold and Myra Strober for helpful discussions of an early draft of the present study. We are also grateful to Geraldine Joncich Clifford, Jo-Ann Day, Audri Gordon Lanford, James O'Connor, Myra Strober and David Tyack for generously making unpublished materials available. Rosalie Fox, Liz Good Menard, Lise Kreps and Louise Ledoux, who assisted with the gathering and entry of the quantitative data, lent much enthusiasm and support to the project. Finally, we thank the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, for their generous financial support, and the Centre for Research on Women, Stanford University, California, which provided one of the authors with space and a stimulating environment while part of the paper was being written.

[2] Leila V. Middleton Diary, kindly lent to one of the authors by her grandaughter,

Sharon Trewartha, 1974-75.

[3] See Alexander Forrester's comments about the importance of reserving headmasterships and the more advanced classes for male teachers in *The Teachers' Text-Book* (Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1867), pp. 565-66. In the case of Quebec, see the remarks of school inspector Jean Crepault printed in *The Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Province of Quebec* (1872-73, pp. 51-52) in which he insists that the model schools be reserved for male teachers.

[4] In much of rural North America, there is evidence that women were heavily involved in domestic textile production until at least the 1840s, and consequently spent long hours spinning and weaving. Even after the wide-spread adoption of factory made textiles, much clothing was made at home in rural households until the advent of ready-made garments and catalogue shopping at the turn of the 20th century. Finally, girls and women had year round work in the preparation of food and care of dairy and poultry yards, not to mention seasonal work as well, if they were responsible for vegetables or fruit grown on the farm.

[5] A study of at least one set of Ontario rural trustee records confirms this finding. The minute books for S.S. No. 11, Norwich North, in Oxford County, indicate the firm intention of the trustees of this two-storey village school to hire a male headmaster and female assistants, during the period covered by the books, when the school expanded from a staff of two to four teachers. Record Group 51, 108 61, No. 2, Public Archives of Ontario.

[6] Ontario and Quebec underwent constitutional changes in 1840 and 1867 and both resulted in changes in their official names. For the sake of simplicity, we have sacrificed minute historical accuracy and referred to Lower Canada/Canada East and Upper Canada/Canada West as Quebec and Ontario, respectively, throughout the paper.

[7] For a discussion of literacy in Quebec as well as an overview of the literature on the topic, see Allen Greer, "The Pattern of Literacy in Quebec, 1745-1899," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 11, 22 (Nov. 1978): 293-335. The author argues quite convincingly that "the 1842-61 and 1862-71 female educational cohorts in Quebec have proportionately more semi-literates and more literates than the male cohorts" (p. 61). The observation is also made that in Ontario, in contrast to Quebec in this period, men were more literate.

[8] One need only to skim the reports of the school inspectors to see how keenly interested they were in the feminine takeover of schooling. It is especially worth noting the following in Quebec (Province), *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1871, p. 34; 1872, pp. 51-52; 1873, pp. 54-55).

[9] Remarks made by inspector Maurault and recorded in Canada (Province), *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for Lower Canada* (1861, p. 188).

[10] The 1851 manuscript census was not used for the Quebec case study because many county boundaries were changed in the 1850s. Montmagny, one of the counties in which we were interested, did not exist in 1851.

[11] For instance, school inspector, J.N.A. Archambault, reported to the superintendent that parishes in his district were teaming with "firebrands" hostile to educational legislation. See *The Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1853, p. 72). In 1853 a similar report was submitted by Inspector Maurault for the county

of Yamaska; see p. 113.

[12] Annual Reports of the Ontario Department of Education for the 1850s.

[13] Ibid, for the years 1851, (p. 69), 1852 and 1856, (p. 216).

[14] James W. Breakenridge to Egerton Ryerson, 23 May 1850, RG 2 C-6-C, Public Archives of Ontario.

[15] Annual Reports of the Ontario Department of Education for the 1850s.

[16] Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Statistics Canada, RG31, Census Records, 1851-1881 (microfilms). For exact references to the microfilms of the censuses that have been used, see Thomas H. Hillman, *Catalogue of Census Returns on Microfilm/Catalogue de recensements sur microfilm, 1661-1881* (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, Federal Archives Division, 1981).

[17] For the purposes of the Ontario study, a number of teacher categories listed in the manuscript census returns, such as "governess," "music teacher" and "professor" were eliminated. Those counted as school teachers were the individuals listed as "teacher," "common school teacher," "school teacher," "school mistress" and "school master." This was because we wished to focus on teachers in the "public" (in the sense of "non-domestic") schools and also to eliminate colleges from the study.

[18] When census statistics were compared to the numbers collected by departments of education for the years 1851 and 1861, we discovered that the numbers did not match, with female teachers tending to be more prominent in the latter than the former. We suspect that this was not only because the census failed to reflect the widespread sexual division of labour that occurred in rural schools where men taught in the winter and women in the summer, but also because census enumerators were more likely to take note of male than female employment.

[19] See also, Manuscript Census for Dundas County, 1871. The fact that Catharine Carter was not listed in either 1851 or 1861 confirms our belief that female teachers were underenumerated in those census years, since both of the other sources indicate a teaching career spanning the years between 1851 and 1872. Since she appears on the 1871 census return as Plantz, her marriage must have taken place in 1872 or later, and therefore does appear to have ended her teaching career.

[20] Information on place of birth for the population at large was found in the *Census of Canada, 1881.*

[21] The designation "head of household" does not appear on the census returns, and the instructions to the enumerators refer only to "heads of families occupying lands, whether male or female" under the heading "Agricultural Census" in 1861. The designation is a historical convention which presumably corresponds to 19th century views on the nature of the family and the household. The head is taken to be the first person listed in each household group on the census returns. The person listed first is invariably the husband in the case of a married couple, or the oldest husband in the case of two married couples. Widows and widowers are listed first in households with no married children; but when living with married children, they are usually found as relatives. In the Ontario census, young teachers were rarely found living in non-family situations.

[22] Because there were those who were not children of the head of household, it was difficult to distinguish between boarders, relatives and visitors on the manuscript

census. We decided to incorporate these categories into a single group in the Ontario research, labelled "boarder/relative," for the sake of simplicity and also because visitors would likely have been a very small group in any case. For the present analysis, the important point is that the main distinction to be made was between children of household heads and persons whose relationships to household heads were more distant.

[23] "Resolutions of the School Association of the Eastern District" in D. P. McDonald to Egerton Ryerson, July 9, 1850, RG 2 C-6-C, Public Archives of Ontario. See also "The Superintendent of Schools for the London District on the Working of the School Act of 1846, February, 1848," in J. G. Hodgins, ed. *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada* (Toronto, 1894-1910), Vol. 7, p. 130; Superintendent, Scott Township, to Ryerson, 22 February, 1851, RG 2 C-6-C and Ryerson to John Hendry, 7 November, 1846, RG 2 C I, Letterbook C, p. 160, Public Archives of Ontario.

[24] Montmagny and Terrebonne were chosen for this study because they represent different types of economies, the former sending men to the Gaspé where they worked in fishing or lumbering and the latter providing work on the homestead. The location of Terrebonne in the Montreal Plan, north of the city, and of Montmagny on the St. Lawrence River, close to Quebec City, also provided interesting points of contrast. It should be noted as well that in the process of coding, the following were recorded: music teacher, English teacher, teacher, master, mistress, brother and sister. All religious men and women listed as living in a convent or monastery were included. From the manuscript census it is impossible to tell which of the nuns and brothers were not teaching, but it is unlikely that more than two or three of the entire sample were engaged in work outside the classroom.

[25] The 31 percent represents the average for the three census years. Because the number of male lay teachers was so small, providing a table on the place of origin of male teachers did not seem useful.

[26] The census taker in 1861 for one of the villages in Montmagny provided details about the work of fishermen in the county. For a description see Manuscript Census of Canada, Montmagny County, St. Thomas, 1861. For a study of Montmagny and the counties surrounding it see Raoul Blanchard, *L'Est du Canada Français* (Montreal: Beauchemin, 1935).

[27] One school inspector put it quite succinctly: "Men prefer engaging as servants, or following some other vocation to that of teaching." *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1853, pp. 93-94).

[28] The location of the schools and the names of the teachers who taught there can be traced through the manuscript census.

[29] Legislation implemented in the 1850s demanding of prospective teachers a diploma from a normal school or the successful completion of a qualifying exam in the presence of a board of examiners or the school inspector may have had the effect of discouraging the very young from assuming the responsibilities of tending school.

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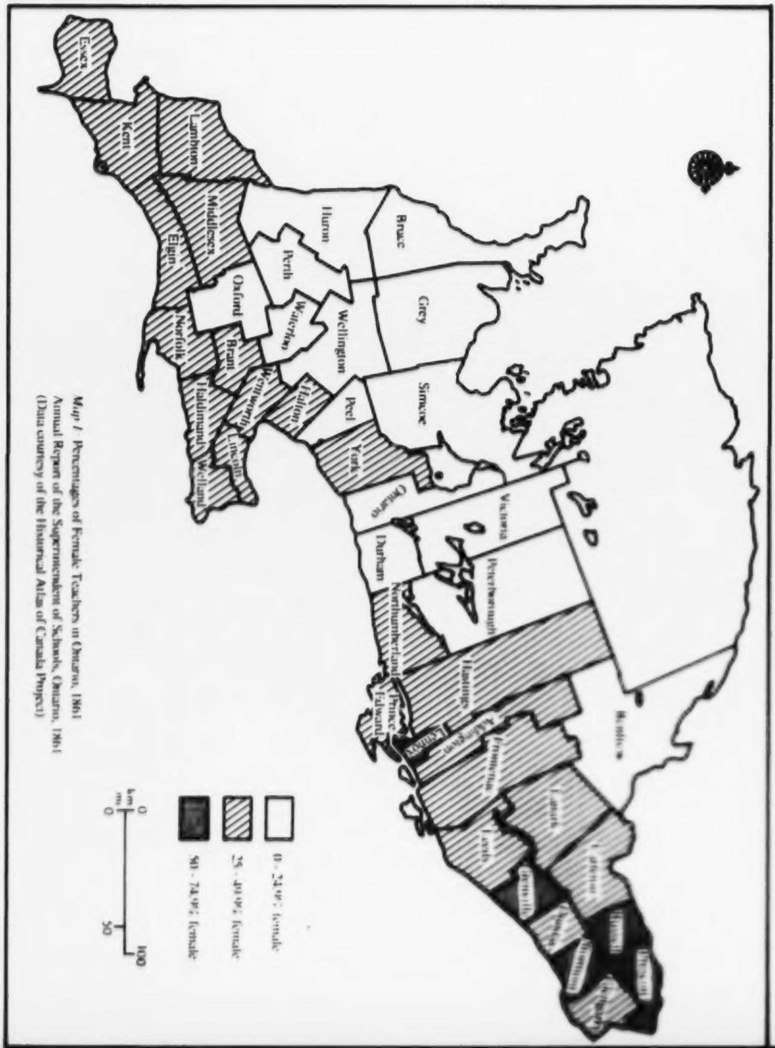
Essex
Kent
Lambton
Middlesex
Elgin
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Bruce
Perth
Oxford
Norfolk
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Waterloo
Wellington
Grey
Simcoe
Peel
Halton
Wentworth
Haldimand
Lincoln
Welland
York
Ontario
Victoria
Durham
Peterborough
Northumberland
Hastings
Prince Edward
Renfrew
Lennox
Addington
Frontenac
Lanark
Leeds
Carleton
Grenville
Dundas
Russell
Stormont
Prescott
Glengarry
0 - 24.9% female
25 - 49.9% female
50 - 74.9% female
km 0 100
mi 0 50

Map 1 Percentages of Female Teachers in Ontario, 1861
Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Ontario, 1861
(Data courtesy of the Historical Atlas of Canada Project)

2

Child Care Workers in Canada

Task Force on Child Care

In 1961, only 14% of all Canadian families were supported by the income of both husband and wife; in 1971, the proportion had risen to 36% of all families. The growing trend of two-earner families has not abated. By 1981, as many as 49% of all families were supported by the incomes of both spouses. Even more noteworthy is the fact that, in 1984, 51.5% of mothers with a child under 3 years of age were employed (Task Force on Child Care, 1986: 7-8).[1]

In 1970, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada recognized that child care services were in a state of crisis, overburdened by the increase of dual-income families. In particular, it found that most employed mothers did not have access to licensed care for their children; they had to rely on informal and ad hoc help.

In the 1980s, child care is still in a state of crisis. In response to this problem, the federal government appointed in May 1984 a Task Force on Child Care. The Task Force assessed the need for child care and parental leave in Canada, the adequacy of the present systems, and made recommendations on the federal government's role in the development of a national system of quality child care. According to the Task Force, licensed care – in both child care centres and family homes – provides a total of merely 172,000 spaces in Canada. This is just 8.8% of the estimated total need of two million children. The vast majority of the children who receive non-parental care are in unlicensed arrangements (Task Force on Child Care, 1986: 51). Unlicensed care may be provided in the child's home or in the caregiver's home. The quality of such care can vary tremendously: from a caregiver who creates an environment of love, compassion, intelligence, security, cleanliness, good nutrition and challenging experiences to someone who neglects, abuses, or confines the children. The problem with unlicensed arrangements is that they are not subject to any standards, even the most minimal (Task Force on Child Care, 1986: 47).

Unfortunately, we know very little about the people who provide child care. A striking feature about child care workers, however, which is often taken for granted, is that almost all are women. As is the case for most women in Canada, they work in an occupation that is predominantly female (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1984). Like mothers, their work tends to be – if not unpaid, certainly underpaid. Like female teachers in the nineteenth century in Canada, their work often has to be done under appalling and exploitative conditions. Though child care is demanding and requires a wide range of skills, many people consider caregivers not as teachers but simply as "baby sitters." Crucial to any reform of the system of child care are improvements in the training and working conditions of the caregivers. In what follows, we have reproduced a chapter of the Report of the Task Force on Child Care which attempts to piece together a portrayal of those who care for other people's children. *(editor's introduction)*

Introduction•

Child rearing is a complex and difficult task requiring a broad range of personal skills and familiarity with a rapidly expanding body of knowledge concerning child development. Parents and caregivers do not simply keep children safe from physical dangers. The skills and knowledge of those caring for children have a profound and lasting effect on the health and the emotional, social, intellectual and physical development of the children in their care. Good care responds to this entire complexity of children's needs. Of prime concern to Canadian parents today are the skills and knowledge of those who offer child-rearing services for a fee and who will thus share the task of raising their children.

Research on Caregivers

This paper describes the characteristics, working conditions, rights and obligations under the Income Tax Act of three types of caregivers:

(1) workers in licensed centres;

(2) caregivers in licensed family homes; and

(3) unlicensed caregivers who work either in their own homes or who are employed in the child's home. (The caregiver employed in the child's home may be either a daily sitter or a live-in nanny or relative.)

Given the importance of the caregiver's role, it is striking that so little empirical information can be found in the literature about caregivers. Very little is known about the characteristics of those who work as caregivers or about the environment in which they work.

Consequently, the Task Force commissioned a study to collect data on the demographic characteristics, working conditions and earnings of licensed child caregivers (Schom-Moffat, 1985). Results, based on a national random sample survey of employees in licensed centres, reveal that while these workers have more education than the average Canadian worker, their jobs, on the whole, are characterized by poor salaries, lack of benefits, and little room for career advancement. These results are supplemented by a 1982 study of licensed family home child care providers done by *l'Office des services de garde à l'enfance*, the agency responsible for child care in Quebec (Bouchard, 1982).[2]

A second report commissioned by the Task Force reviewed Canadian studies of the informal child care market in four urban centres (Winnipeg, Montreal, Kitchener and Metro Toronto), which describe characteristics of both users and providers of informal child care services (Chenier, 1985: 158-60). Each of the four studies includes a focus on the informal child care market, but there were some differences among them.

The Winnipeg study was based on interviews with 2202 parents who used child care on a full or part-time basis for their preschool and school-aged children (Stevens, 1984). This study, the only one to include school-aged children, divided care into four groups: non-market care (provided free of charge, mainly by relatives), private-market care (unlicensed), subsidized licensed care, and non-subsidized licensed care. Information concerning non-market and private-market caregivers in this survey is included in this chapter.

The Montreal study included 308 parents with preschool children, aged five years or less, and included full-time, part-time and occasional care (Pelletier, 1983). The types of care used in the study were: care in the home, care outside the home, care by a relative, and care at a child care centre. The first three categories have been included in results presented here.

The Kitchener study examined the choices of 99 mothers with children between the ages of two and six who were working full-time (Lero, 1981). The children of 37 mothers were in informal arrangements. The others were in family home child care, non-profit child care centres and private child care. The informal care users included 22 using sitter care in the sitter's home, 4 using sitter care in the respondent's home, 5 using a relative in the respondent's home, 4 using father care, and 2 using a relative outside the home.

The Metro Toronto study looked at 742 respondents with preschool aged children in care for more than fifteen hours per week (Johnson, 1977). The respondents used a sitter, a resident relative, a non-resident relative, and a child care centre. Only the Metro Toronto study provides a significant analysis of the characteristics of caregivers. This study was used to provide a further description of caregivers in a subsequent publication by the same authors (Johnson and Dineen, 1981). Some of these findings also appear in this paper.

The results of these studies raise concerns about informal caregivers' qualifications and indicate that unlicensed child care workers are employed under conditions inferior to those of their licensed counterparts. Generally speaking, workers in licensed centres, and caregivers who work in the child's home are categorized as employees, while both licensed and unlicensed caregivers who care for children in their own homes are considered to be self-employed. The determination of this status has a significant impact on both the working conditions and tax treatment of the caregivers.

Workers who care for children in licensed child care centres may be found working in commercial centres, non-profit centres, or in municipal child care centres in Alberta and Ontario. Provincial child care legislation regulates workers' qualifications and staff child ratios, while their wages and working conditions are protected under employment standards and similar labour legislation.

Similarly, each province sets standards for licensing family home care and often sets maximum caregiver child ratios that are, in all cases inclusive of the caregiver's own children. In Quebec, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Alberta, licensed homes are affiliated with an agency. In British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Yukon, they are licensed and monitored directly by the province. Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories are the only jurisdictions that do not license family home care.

Regulation covers a relatively small part of the child care industry. Surveys indicate that more than 80 percent of child care in Canada is provided by caregivers in the unlicensed or informal market, who care for children in their own homes or in the child's home (Chenier, 1985: 154).

Accurate information on the informal market is very difficult to obtain. Only the Metro Toronto study looked at the caregivers themselves in any detail, and this study did not distinguish between caregivers working in their own homes and those providing care in the child's home. While the information presented in this chapter does provide some indication of characteristics and working conditions of caregivers in the informal market, our knowledge of this sector is incomplete.

Characteristics of Caregivers

Age and Sex

The Task Force survey of licensed care workers found that the majority of workers in licensed centres were between the ages of 20 and 30, and 99 percent of the respondents were women.

In the licensed family homes surveyed, the majority of caregivers (98%) were women. On average, these women were older than their counterparts in licensed centres. Generally, caregivers in licensed homes were either mothers in their 20s and 30s with their own children at home, or older women in their 40s and 50s who were not caring for young children of their own.

In the Quebec study of licensed family home care, all caregivers were women. In four cases, however, husbands collaborated as caregivers. The average age was 36.6, somewhat older than workers in child care centres.

Among unlicensed caregivers providing care either in their own homes or in the children's homes, the overwhelming majority were women, but the age range did vary. The Toronto and Montreal informal market studies yielded some information as to the ages of unlicensed caregivers. In Montreal and Toronto, caregivers ranged in age from 15 or less, to over 68. Generally, sitters in the parental home tended to be younger (25 to 30 years in Toronto), while the average age of those caring in the caregiver's home was older (37 years in Toronto). In the Toronto study, 97 percent of the caregivers were female and 75 percent were married.

Motivation and Job Commitment

The survey conducted for the Task Force found that the majority of workers in licensed child care centres entered the field because they enjoyed working with young children and wanted to contribute to their growth and development. Child care centre workers felt that they must work hard to counter the image that they are little more than babysitters. Over 60 percent described themselves as teachers.

For many, the enjoyment of working with children was the reason they continued in the job. About half the workers were committed to staying in the field for 10 years or more. Some did not know how long they would stay, while others planned to leave when they had families of their own. About a quarter were planning to stay only a few years. Some wanted to work with children in other settings, while many expressed dissatisfaction with the low pay and low status of working in child care.

Licensed family home caregivers undertook child care work for different reasons. Younger home child care providers often cited a desire to stay home with, and have company for, their own children. Older women without training or education enabling them to work outside the home cited a desire for an interesting activity and something to do. However, most providers from both age groups expressed a need for additional income as a motivation for caring for children. While two-thirds viewed themselves as family child care providers or caregivers, some viewed their work not so much as a job with benefits and salary, but more as an extension of the work they do or did with their own children.[3]

In the Quebec study of licensed family home child care providers, respondents were asked to rate, on a scale of one to five, the importance attached to different motivations for working as a caregiver. Love of children rated far above the others, with 81.9 percent indicating this motivation was very or extremely important. For one-third of the caregivers surveyed, finding a companion for their own child was very or extremely important. The need to earn an income, the desire to have an activity and the possibility of earning an income at home were considered important, very or extremely important, to well over half the sample. Of the women in this sample, 92.6 per cent had children of their own, although only a third had a preschool-aged child at the time of the study.

Many licensed family home child care providers viewed this job as a temporary one. The younger caregivers in particular planned to offer this service only until their own children were of school age. Some, however, planned to continue until they were physically unable to do so.

Letters that the Task Force received from licensed family home caregivers vividly described their perception of their roles and the demands that were made of them.

> The job involves being a maid, a cook, a child psychologist, a teacher, and a mother to these children – from getting a baby onto solid foods, to toilet training, to teaching him to walk, talk, do's and don'ts, to the basics of the alphabet, counting, colours, body health and body grooming, to the day to day trivia and hassle of learning to be – what a deal. And you can't help but love these children who are yours for 2/3 of their waking lives. With such enormous output and so little recognition or recompense, you'd have to be a lunatic to want to be a Day Care mother. But I do. . . .
>
> Name withheld
> Mansons Landing, B.C.

> It is no longer enough to rely upon our own experience as a mother in order to give complete care to someone else's children. As a day care provider I am expected to attend on-going lectures and classes pertaining to a child's well-being. We study nutrition, psychology, child development, first aid, child abuse and also recreational and educational activities specifically designed to create interest. Over the years I have had to add adult psychology to the already abundant list of subject matter necessary to do my job.
>
> . . . a troubled parent, whether intentionally or not, can pass these worries to their children. Predictably there is a wide range of reactions; temper tantrums, extremely destructive behaviour, heightened aggression or a total mental withdrawal by the child from his surroundings and other people. The only way to correct this is to deal with the root of the problem – the parent . . . many times, just having someone to talk to can ease the frustration they feel and eventually ease the situation.
>
> Corrine Leger
> Stoney Creek, Ontario

Less is known about the motivation and job commitment of unlicensed caregivers. In only one of the four informal market studies – the Metro Toronto study – was this aspect of unlicensed care addressed. Researchers in the Metro Toronto study often found that caregivers were in the job because it was work they could do in their own home while they cared for their own children, learned a new language, tried to find other work, or while illness kept them out of their usual work. About 25 percent of caregivers in this study had regular or recurring health problems.

In the Metro Toronto study, over 70 percent of unlicensed caregivers fell within the two lowest categories of socioeconomic status, with almost 50 per cent in the lowest category. Thus, the socioeconomic status of the majority of caregivers was below that of the parents using their services.

The Metro Toronto study also found that informal caregivers with little formal education tended not to define caregiving as work. Those who had gone beyond elementary school were more likely to regard it as a job and to demand higher rates of pay. Twenty percent of these caregivers felt that infants would get better care in a centre, and the majority felt centres would provide better care for children over three.

Concerns regarding the lack of qualifications and commitment of private caregivers was a recurrent theme expressed in letters received by the Task Force from parents, particularly from those who had employed caregivers in their own homes.

> I found that, generally speaking, the sitters I had in my home were young, out-of-school, out-of work girls. They were not particularly bright nor ambitious. Didn't have any sparkle or zest for living. They didn't really want to look after my kids, but up until then it was the only way they had to make some money. However, neither did they look upon it as being a job – something they had to put a little effort into, a job to be worked at, a challenge. This was not the person to replace Mummy, but what could I do? I tried with several girls to develop the proper attitude, to see the relationship I had with my children, to notice they were fun and interesting. I suggested games, activities, books to read, walks in the park, collecting leaves or stones or looking for animals, etc. etc. My sitters were usually: polite, quiet, well brought up and yet what I was saying to them regarding the care of my children was completely foreign to them. What my sitters really got involved with was talking on the phone, watching TV, eating, perhaps having a friend over and perhaps a walk – but a walk to the local department store....
>
> Margaret Eastwood
> Chateauguay, Quebec.

> I tried having a babysitter coming to the house. She would watch T.V. and lock the children out of the house and leave them in the back yard for hours. Another babysitter left with her boyfriend and my neighbour informed me my children were playing on the street.
>
> Cecile MacLeod
> Hamilton, Ontario.

> The lady we decided on, after checking with her grown son who owned a local business and visiting her downtown apartment and having her visit our home and meet our children, became drunk (on our liquor), used abusive language and hit one of our children – all on her first day of work.
>
> Name withheld
> Victoria, B.C.

Not all parents who wrote to the Task Force were dissatisfied with the private care arrangements they had made. Quite to the contrary, some described informal caregivers with a real commitment to their work. Inevitably, however, these parents reported that finding such a person was largely a matter of luck.

> We were incredibly lucky to find an experienced, loving woman to look after our children and the results have been beneficial all round. I am, I think, a good mother, but not a perfect one; Ross's "other mother" counterbalances

> my failings and gives me perspectives on my child's progress and therefore more confidence. Having some time away from him makes me enjoy my time with him all the more. It also allows me to bring in a little much-needed income without having to worry about him.
>
> Martha C. Wolf
> Halifax, Nova Scotia

> This lady is wonderful with children, loves them, disciplines them and believes in all similar values as both myself and husband believe in regarding child care. She is also a magnificent cook, cleans the house better than I will ever do it, bakes my bread, prepares our meals, does washing, spring cleaning, ironing etc. . . I come home partially drained from pressure of jobs and responsibilities but face two happy and fulfilled children that have received love that I wasn't there to give, good healthy meals and plenty of supervised outings plus the house chores done to the very last.
>
> Claudette Dorion
> Chatham, New Brunswick

Education and Training

Compared to the average Canadian worker, child care workers in licensed centres are well educated. While almost two-thirds of Canadian workers have high school education or less, almost half of the respondents in the study had completed one or two years of Early Childhood Education. More than one-third had more than two years' E.C.E. with some university, and 11 percent had completed a university degree. Thirteen percent had only a high school diploma and less than one percent had not finished high school.

Regional variations in education levels were evident: more than 80 per cent of Quebec respondents had more than two years' E.C.E., while more than half the respondents in the three prairie provinces claimed less than two years' E.C.E.

Few of the workers felt there was an incentive to further their current level of training. Because the majority felt there were no tangible incentives to do so, the primary motivation for more training was personal satisfaction and achievement of personal goals.

Parents who wrote to the Task Force emphasized how important they considered specialized training for caregivers to be.

> Does a Ph.D. graduate give better care to a child than a tender loving girl who is interested in day care? Maybe not, but there is certain information available on child care that I would like someone looking after my daughter to have – about ways to raise my child's self-esteem, about healthy things to feed my child, about first aid and safety, about play materials appropriate to my child's age, or about methods of non-punitive discipline. No one is asking for a Ph.D. – just a basic training program.
>
> Pat Palmer
> Edmonton, Alberta.

> My 4 year old daughter attends Garderie les Bois Verts. ... The educators are highly competent individuals, trained to deal with many situations, physical or mental. With the rising divorce rate, these people must often deal with the very unpredictable emotions of young children who are trying to sort out their own feelings at a very stressful time. Through the courses and seminars the educators attend, they have offered many helpful suggestions that I have put to use in dealing with my daughter and I have come to value their opinion.
>
> Heather Vatcher
> Dollard des Ormeaux, Quebec

None of the provinces that license family home care has specific training requirements for family home child care providers. Caregiver training courses and seminars are, however, sometimes offered by supervising agencies in the four provinces that require supervision of licensed family homes (Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia), and by provincial officials in Manitoba.

Among licensed family home caregivers in Quebec, 40.5 percent had not completed secondary school and 41.3 percent had finished the secondary level only, a level of education slightly below that of the general female population in Quebec, and considerably below that of workers in child care centres. Of the respondents, 88.7 percent indicated that a training course was available through their agency, and four-fifths of these had taken the course.

Of the licensed family home caregivers in the Task Force survey, about one-third had not completed high school, while about 40 percent had a high school diploma. About 11 percent had some university education, but not usually in a field related to early childhood education. To the question, "What permits or credentials do you hold?" most responded, "None," or described their credentials as "being parents themselves." Many saw their experience raising their own families as sufficient training, and most felt there was no incentive for further training in the field. A few, all affiliated with agencies, saw increased income, or being able to take more children, as an incentive to attend occasional workshops provided by the agency.

The Metro Toronto study of unlicensed or informal caregivers found that only four percent had any formal training or professional experience. Six per cent had no prior experience or only casual babysitting experience. The majority (58%) stated their previous child care experience to be their own experience as a parent. Most of these caregivers had little formal education. Approximately 75 percent had not completed high school, and more than half went no further than elementary school.

Length of Service and Turnover

Fifty-eight percent of workers in licensed centres had been in the field for more than three years; about 25 percent had worked between five and 10 years;

and 13 percent for more than 10 years. The survey revealed a tendency to switch centres every four to five years. Sixty-one percent of respondents had been child care workers for more than a year, but had been in their current centres for less than a year.

Length of service varied considerably for caregivers in licensed family homes. Over fifty percent had been in their current jobs for less than three years, and 5 percent for more than 10 years. In the Quebec study of licensed family home caregivers, only 38.3 percent had worked as a caregiver before becoming affiliated with an agency, and the average experience was only four years. The average number of months worked as an accredited caregiver was 13.3; accreditation of family home caregivers, however, was relatively recent in Quebec at the time the study was conducted.

The Metro Toronto study of unlicensed caregivers showed that half had provided care for less than two years, and about one-third had looked after children for five years or more.

Earnings and Working Conditions of Caregivers

Implications of Employment Status

Before examining the wages and working conditions of caregivers, it is important to understand the impact of employment status on caregivers' employment rights and responsibilities.

Centre workers are employees. They work for wages and their hours of work, minimum wages, and benefits are regulated by provincial or territorial legislation. Like all other Canadian employees, they must file income tax returns, and they and their employers must contribute to the Unemployment Insurance and Canada/Quebec Pension Plans.

Caregivers in licensed homes are usually self-employed. They are considered to be operating a business, either independently or under contract with an agency.[4] This means that minimum employment standards are not applicable to them because employment standards legislation governs only employees. Thus, licensed caregivers working in their own homes have no minimum wage or holiday pay guarantees. They must make their own deductions for Quebec or Canada Pension Plan, keep business records and file an income tax return as a self-employed business person.

The unlicensed caregiver working in her own home is also self-employed, with the same conditions applying to her as to the licensed home caregiver. Both must not only see to their own benefits, but they must also keep business records, remit income tax and file tax returns. In the case of licensed family home caregivers, the agency with which they are affiliated often issues receipts to parents for income tax purposes. The unlicensed home caregiver often does not provide receipts, nor does she file tax returns or make the required C./Q.P.P.

and income tax remittances.

Unlicensed caregivers who work in the child's home are employees and thus are treated in the same way as are centre care workers for the purposes of U.I.C., C./Q.P.P. and income tax. However, most provinces consider them to be "domestic workers," and they are often exempted from provincial/territorial employment standards legislation, or receive only minimal legislation protection. In fact, many of these workers are paid less than minimum wage in under-the-table arrangements with employing parents, do not receive the benefit of statutory unemployment and pension programs, and do not report their incomes for tax purposes.

Foreign domestics who work in private Canadian homes are a special case. They too are employees for tax and benefits purposes. However, their hours of work and rates of pay are set through immigration policy, which requires these conditions to be specified in employment contracts. A more detailed discussion of these issues follows.

Hours of Work

Three out of five child care centre workers in the Task Force survey worked a full week of between 35 and 40 paid hours. Of these hours, not all were spent with children. While 63 percent of centre workers did spend all of their time with the children, 21 percent spent three-quarters of their working time with the children, 6 percent half of their time, and 8 per cent one-quarter of their time, or less.

One-third of the workers in licensed centres reported that they worked several hours each week without pay in addition to their paid hours. Only 3 percent received compensation for overtime work. Only one-quarter of centre employees were paid for preparation or planning time, and less than half were paid for attending staff meetings. The hours of work for licensed family home caregivers tended to be longer. While hours of operation varied from caregiver to caregiver, 68 per cent worked more than 35 to 40 hours, 12 percent worked 35 to 40 hours each week, and about 13 percent worked less. Fully 40 percent of home caregivers worked more than 45 to 50 hours per week. About 40 percent worked less than two unpaid hours, and 37 percent worked five or more unpaid hours per week. About one-third received help, mostly from spouses and children.

Seventy percent of providers reported that they spent all their time with the children, and 20 percent spent three-quarters of their time with children. Much of the remaining time was spent on household tasks, or as a break while the children slept.

In the Quebec study of licensed family home caregivers, nearly 60 percent worked more than 40 hours a week, and another 20 percent worked 33 to 40 hours per week; 60 percent received children before eight in the morning, and in nearly 25 percent of the cases, the last child left after six in the evening. Over half took care of the children in the evening on a regular or occasional basis; more than a third sometimes or regularly kept children overnight, and more than a third offered weekend services. Only six (of 122) had adult collaborators, four of whom were husbands.

No comparable data are available with regard to unlicensed caregivers. However, for those working in their own homes, it is probably safe to assume that the situation is similar to that of licensed family home caregivers. For many full-time caregivers, the working day can be as long as 10 hours, with no scheduled coffee or lunch breaks. When parents do not pick up a child on time, the caregiver's day is extended and her family's life disrupted as a result.

Employment standards legislation in some provinces and territories regulate hours of work, rates of pay and some benefits for caregivers who are employees in either child care centres, or as nannies or sitters in the child's home. Caregivers who come from abroad to work in Canadian homes enter into employment contracts with their employers. These contracts specify maximum hours and other conditions which are controlled by the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission. Minimum Wage legislation and immigration procedures are reviewed in a subsequent section.

Unionization

While some child care workers in licensed child care centres are organized, those who provide child care in the child's homes are not.

Based on telephone interviews with various sources, researchers for the Task Force estimated that, of the approximately 3200 licenced centres in Canada, about 8 percent were unionized. The rate of unionization varied considerably by province, with the highest rates in B.C. (21%) and Quebec (18%), and the lowest rates in the Atlantic region (1%).

Earnings

The Task Force study of wages of child care workers in licensed centres found that in October 1984, the mean wage for a child care worker was $7.29 per hour ($14,212 annually) for a 35 to 40 hour week. This wage is fairly constant in all regions except in Atlantic Canada, where the mean wage was $5.00 per hour ($9,750 annually), 30 percent below the national average. The key factors influencing wages appear to be centre funding source, the presence of a union, and job classification. The size of city also seems to have some influence on wages; centres in cities with populations over 100,000 paid wages higher than those in cities with populations under that number.

Staff in centres operated on a profit basis received the lowest wages, while those in municipal centres received the highest. In centres operated for a profit, staff earned 30 percent less than staff in non-profit centres, and 50 percent less than staff who worked in municipal centres. Staff working in centres represented by a union earned 30 percent more than did their non-unionized counterparts. Only 13 percent of workers received a yearly cost-of-living increase. One-third received periodic merit increases.

Wages also increased with job responsibility and educational levels. Aides received about $9,900 per year, teachers about $13,900 per year, and program directors an average of $17,500 per year. Those with one year of E.C.E. received, on average, $12,300 per year; those with more than two years' E.C.E., $15,100; and those with a B.A., $16,100 per year.

The national average weekly wage for centre workers was $273.00, varying from a low of $189.00 in the Atlantic region, to a high of $294.00, in Quebec. Compared to the average weekly industrial wage, day care workers fared poorly: in British Columbia, they earned only 64 percent of the average weekly earnings for all industries; in Ontario, 66 percent. In Quebec, wages were higher than in other regions, but the wage level still amounted to only 74 per cent of the average industrial wage in that province.

When compared to workers with similar jobs, child care worker wages are low. Child care workers received only 64 percent of the salary of a counsellor for the mentally handicapped, and about 80 percent of that of a nursing assistant. In Ontario and Quebec, experienced child care workers received only about half the wage of experienced elementary school teachers.

> Day Care workers are paid peanuts. These people have to study two or more years to become what they are. They have to be more intelligent, energetic, intuitive, compassionate and caring. They are responsible for the formative years of our next generation and they are doing the best they can in cramped, understaffed, overcrowded nurseries. They have no incentive other than their own dedication.
>
> J. Sawers
> Winnipeg, Manitoba

> There is a Canada-wide subsidy in effect right now. We, the staff of centres throughout Canada, are the subsidy.
>
> Sunburst Children's Centre
> Downsview, Ontario.

As noted above, licensed child care centres must comply with provincial/territorial laws regulating minimum wage, vacation pay, statutory holidays, maximum hours, payment for overtime work, notice of termination, and workers' compensation. For example, Manitoba has a minimum wage of $4.00 per hour, and requires employers to provide two weeks' paid vacation for an employee of up to five years, and three weeks for employees of over five years. Hours of work are limited to 40 hours a week, eight hours per day. Otherwise, overtime pay is required. Ontario centre employees must receive $4.00 per hour, work only eight hours a day to a maximum of 48 hours per week, with two weeks' vacation or four percent of gross earnings as vacation pay. The survey conducted for the Task Force suggests that this legislation is not always complied with by centre operators.

Many licensed family home caregivers in the Task Force survey did not know what their incomes were, or their expenses. Their incomes fluctuate from week to week, since these caregivers are paid a per diem rate for the children in their care, generally based on attendance. Therefore, these caregivers are not paid when children are absent, whether due to illness, vacation or parental choice. From this fluctuating income the caregiver deducts her expenses, including food for meals and snacks, insurance, toys and play materials, rent, cleaning, wear and tear, advertising, and so on. Since these caregivers are self-employed, provincial/territorial employment standards and other related legislation do not apply to them.

Calculated on the current number of children in care on a full-time basis, the mean gross for licensed family home caregivers surveyed was $3.30 per hour ($7,722 annually), and the mean net, $2.26 ($5,288 annually) – lower than the minimum wage in each province. There appeared to be no correlation between income and education, training, or experience. For most of the sample, income derived from caregiving represented only a small portion of total household earnings, even though many providers entered the field because they needed additional income.

> In February 1984 I was licensed by the city for five children plus my daughter. I provide hot lunches and two snacks according to the Canada Food Guide, play stimulation, free play, comfortable and quiet sleeping accommodations and general health standards. I charge a reasonable rate of twelve dollars per day and there is no charge for absent days or driving one of the children to school. I enjoy having children come into my home and also being home full-time for my daughter. I know that my daughter is being cared for the way I prefer and the parents of the other children can be assured that I care for their children the way they want. I have open communications with my parents and they can drop in at any time. When the children have colds or are on medication, the parents can feel they are given the medications on time. As a parent, I realize how important it is for parents to find a dependable child care facility that enables them to go to work without feeling guilty or anxious about what might happen during the day.
>
> Linda Braun
> Calgary, Alberta

> Why don't you institute minimum wage for this service? It's expected by someone who types letters all day, who works in a dry cleaners or wipes up toilets and floors for a living – are each of these more important than our children? If I made half what a garbageman makes, I could stay with the job – is our garbage more vital than our children? And who ever bothers to even consider it?
>
> Karen Bunker
> Victoria, British Columbia

The 1982 Quebec study of licensed family home child care found that the average fee for a full day with meals was $9.28. More than half (51.9%) of the caregivers were not paid for unscheduled absences, 55 percent were not paid when the child was ill, 46.4 percent were not paid for holidays, and 74 per cent were not paid when the child was not present due to the parents' vacation.

Unlicensed caregivers are in an income situation similar to that of licensed family home caregivers, except that their per diem rates tend to be lower. Payment by attendance rather than by enrollment is the norm, which results in little income security. Unlicensed caregivers working in their own homes have expenses similar to those of licensed family home caregivers. However, these may well be lower, as these care arrangements are not subject to the standards applying to licensed homes. Fewer than half of the informal caregivers in the Metro Toronto study could think of any expense incurred when surveyed, although 42 percent provided food and 15 percent remembered buying toys. This study found that the average income for 281 caregivers in 1976 was $1,268.30, while their average expenses for providing care were $1,633.00. Fifteen percent of these caregivers reported receiving no money for looking after children.

> Recently, I made a full-fledged effort to take in children, to offer day care. Putting my experience as a mother into effect.
>
> I had two children started along with my two and was shocked to find the expenses so much. To consider money for food, supplies, wear and tear on the house – not to mention myself . . . I couldn't NOT ask for more money.
>
> Jan Allan
> Port Elgin, Ontario

Caregivers who work in the child's home are employees, and this status is relevant to their wages and working conditions, but the impact of this status varies from one province or territory to another.[5]

Four jurisdictions (Alberta, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories) exempt domestic workers in private homes from employment standards legislation. This means that caregivers in these provinces and territories have no guarantee of a basic minimum wage, maximum hours of work, overtime pay, vacations and vacation pay, statutory holidays, or unemployment and maternity benefits.

The other provinces provide varying degrees of protection for domestic workers. In British Columbia, Newfoundland and Quebec, domestic workers are covered by employment standards provisions but are subject to a special minimum wage lower than the general provincial minimum. For example, the minimum wage in British Columbia is $3.65 per hour. Domestics must be paid $29.20 per day or part-day worked, but no limit is placed on the number of hours worked. Quebec fixes a standard work week of 53 hours for domestic workers, as compared to the 44-hour week for other workers, and lower minimum wage ($134 per week compared to $4.00 per hour for other workers). Domestics who live outside the employer's home have a standard 44-hour work week and minimum wage of $4.00 per hour. In Newfoundland, the minimum wage for a domestic worker is $2.75 per hour, compared to $4.00 per hour for other workers.

Domestic workers in Prince Edward Island are covered by employment standards legislation and must receive the provincial minimum wage of $4.00 per hour, from which deductions can be made for room and board. Similar deductions can be made in most other jurisdictions.

In Manitoba, domestic workers employed in a private family home for more than 24 hours per week must receive the same minimum wages, maternity leave and notice of termination of employment as other workers. The Manitoba legislation also limits the work day to 12 hours and requires overtime pay after the first eight. Manitoba domestic workers must have 36 consecutive hours of free time each week and six consecutive hours for sleep, as well as time off for meals and reasonable time to attend to personal or private affairs.

In Saskatchewan and Yukon, domestic workers are excluded from the hours of work and overtime provisions contained in the employment standards legislation. However, they are entitled to be paid the general minimum wage.

In Ontario, domestics employed by agencies are covered by the regular provisions of the employment standards legislation. Domestics and nannies employed by a private household for more than 24 hours per week are protected by a separate section of the legislation, which entitles them to two guaranteed free-time periods of 36 and 12 consecutive hours. Overtime rates apply for work voluntarily undertaken in free time. As of March 1, 1985, the minimum wage that applies is $4.00 per hour, or $176 per week. The Ontario legislation also provides two weeks' annual paid vacation and seven paid statutory holidays. To qualify for this protection, nannies or domestics must have formal training or have equivalent experience.

The federal government regulates the conditions of employment for nannies and domestics who come to work in private Canadian homes from outside the country. The wages and working conditions of these caregivers tend to be somewhat better than those for many other caregivers employed outside child care centres. Canadian immigration policy will allow the issuance of a work permit only on the condition that no detriment would be suffered by Canadian workers. Since the employer must show, among other things, that the wages and working conditions would attract Canadians, the employer must pay the minimum wage for domestics, where specified in provincial/territorial legislation; or, where there is no specific minimum wage for domestics, the provincial or territorial minimum wage. Wage increases are based on provincial minimums applicable, with some regard to the cost-of-living. In Ontario, 25 percent was added to the provincial minimum because it was felt that the provincial minimum did not reflect market conditions. This protection is achieved through a standard worker-employer contract established by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. As well, temporary foreign domestics are given counselling assistance and vocational training opportunities to upgrade their skills. Temporary foreign domestics who lose their jobs through no fault of their own are given the opportunity to find further employment in Canada with the help of placement assistance from a Canada Employment Centre.

Job-Related Benefits

With the exception of workers in municipal centres, the majority of workers in child care centres receive few job benefits. Benefits are closely tied to income. The employees with the highest wages tend also to receive the most benefits. Workers with the lowest wages (those working in centres operated for a profit) receive the fewest benefits.

The Task Force Survey results indicate that many child care workers do not receive benefits mandated by law, such as paid breaks, vacation pay, and minimum wage. Only 31 percent received paid breaks, and less than half received paid lunch time. (See the discussion of hours of work and wages.)

Less than half of child care centre employees surveyed had a written job description, and only one-quarter had written personnel policies or a written contract. One-third (half of these unionized) had access to a formal grievance procedure.

Almost all respondents working in municipal centres were offered health care coverage. In addition, more than 80 percent of municipal centre workers were covered by a retirement/pension plan, life insurance, more than one paid sick day per month, and some dental coverage. In contrast, less than one-third of the workers in centres operated on a profit basis, and about 40 percent of workers in non-profit centres were offered health care coverage. While 93 per cent of workers in non-profit centres received at least one paid sick day per month, only 30 percent of worker in commercial centres received this benefit. Three-quarters of workers in commercial centres received a paid vacation, with the majority receiving two weeks per year. Almost 85 percent of workers in non-profit centres received two to four weeks' paid vacation per year.[6] Less than one-quarter of workers received paid maternity leave.

Federal legislation requires employers to deduct from employees' salaries, income tax, contributions to the Canada or Quebec Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance, and to make additional Canada Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance contributions on their behalf. Thus, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance coverage are available as benefits to employees in centres, as they are to all other Canadian employees.

As we have seen, caregivers in licensed family homes are generally considered to be self-employed and are not covered by employment standards and related provincial/territorial legislation, which regulates not only hours of work and rates of pay, but also employee benefits. Therefore, these caregivers do not receive the protection of provincial or territorial legislation relating to benefits such as paid vacation and workers' compensation, and they must provide entirely for other benefits or schemes such as health insurance and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan contributions. Their incomes are directly affected by working days lost because either the children or they themselves are sick or take a vacation, or the children are absent for other reasons. They cannot claim Unemployment Insurance benefits for maternity or unemployment.

Two-thirds of the licensed family home caregivers studied were affiliated with an agency and, of those who received benefits, most had some such affiliation. None of these caregivers received a paid lunch period or breaks. Only 10 per cent had a written job description and only 20 percent had written personnel policies. Fewer than 10 percent had access to formal grievance procedures, but 46 percent worked with a written contract. Ten percent of these caregivers received the equivalent of an annual cost-of-living increase or periodic merit increases, generally tied to attendance at workshops. However, only 17 percent had access to workshops or periodic in-service training. Fifty-seven percent of all licensed family caregivers were compensated for overtime work. Many of these caregivers collected this fee directly from the parents, even when affiliated with an agency. The survey found no correlation between wages and agency affiliation.

Agencies provide a variety of services to licensed family caregivers. For example, some agencies collect per diem fees from the parents and then pay the caregiver on a monthly basis, retaining an administration fee from this amount. In the province of Quebec, the administration fee is subsidized by the province.

Most licensed family home caregivers saw advantages to their affiliation, since the agencies do some or all of the following: visit the homes regularly, provide support and encouragement, collect fees from parents, screen and refer clients, provide advice and assistance for problems, provide emergency replacements, lend toys and equipment, hold workshops, and provide the opportunity to meet other home providers.

In the Quebec study, all the caregivers were affiliated with an agency; 59 percent had a written agreement with the parent and 40 percent a verbal agreement. In most cases the agreement covered the hours of care and method of payment. The majority (74%) knew that their agency held regular meetings, 42 percent attended regularly and another one-third went occasionally. Over half had access to a back-up service, half could borrow toys or educational materials, and most could depend on the agency for assistance in dealing with problems.

The extent to which job benefits are available to unlicensed caregivers depends on whether the caregiver is self-employed (i.e., working in her own home), or whether she is an employee, working in the child's home. The self-employed unlicensed caregiver is in virtually the same position as the self-employed licensed family home caregiver. Employment standards and other related provincial/territorial legislation do not apply. She must, herself, look after basic benefits such as health insurance and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan contributions. She is not eligible for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Even the minimal benefits supplied by agency affiliation are unavailable.

However, depending on the province in which she lives, the unlicensed caregiver who works in the child's home may have a right to minimum employee benefits. For example, in-home babysitters in Manitoba who spend more than 24 hours per week performing domestic services other than child care for the employer are not exempted from the Manitoba Employment Standards Act. Therefore, not only minimum wage, but vacation pay and workers' compensation laws apply. Also, Manitoba allows employees to make voluntary workers' compensation contributions. Saskatchewan does not exempt domestics in private homes from employment standards legislation if the employer is receiving a federal, provincial or municipal grant or wage subsidy. Even when domestics are exempt, they are still entitled to vacation pay.

In all cases, however, federal legislation requiring income tax, Canada or Quebec Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance deductions applies, conferring the corresponding benefits. However, like other minimum standards applying to domestic workers, these provisions frequently are not complied with.

> Child care workers in the home, though providing a much-needed service make less than minimum wage, receive no benefits such as pension benefits, sick leave, holiday pay, or medicare contributions from the employer and are often not paid if the child or children do not come because of illness. I find this situation insupportable and I suspect it may be the reason that some child care situations in the home do not meet minimum standards. No one in our society, including a student, is expected to work for less than minimum wage or without certain basic benefits. Why should those entrusted with the care of our society's children – perhaps one of the most important jobs in society today – be expected to work for less than minimum wage and no benefits?
>
> In Finland there is a program set up by the government to subsidize the cost to the parents of day care in the home and to provide a decent wage and basic benefits to the provider of care in the home. Would not this be one way of ensuring higher quality care in the home and also of ensuring that a whole class of workers, mostly women, are not exploited?
>
> Jane Hodgins
> Antigonish, Nova Scotia

As noted above, foreign domestics working in Canadian homes are entitled to the benefits specified in the standard employment contract imposed by Employment and Immigration Canada. However, the 1981 Task Force on Immigration Practices and Procedures found foreign domestic workers had a very difficult time securing Unemployment Insurance and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits. Although theoretically eligible for Unemployment

Insurance, practically speaking they either find new employment or are required to leave the country before the expiry of the qualifying period for regular benefits. Payments to C.P.P. will not ordinarily produce a pension if the worker retires to her country of origin, depending on whether or not a tax convention between Canada and the foreign worker's home country covers this point. Although C.P.P. contributions made by a person working on an employment authorization can be recovered, the Immigration Task Force found that few persons claimed these amounts.

Job Security

The only available data on job security appear in the findings in the Winnipeg, Montreal, Kitchener and Metro Toronto studies dealing with the informal child care market. Among the numerous disadvantages associated with the job of caring for children in her own home, the unlicensed caregiver has no job security, as the child can be withdrawn at any time, on short notice. The informal market studies indicated considerable variation in both the number of care arrangements and the length of children's stay in these arrangements. The Montreal study found that the average length of stay with the same caregiver was 120 weeks. The results of the Metro Toronto study indicated that care by unlicensed family home caregivers was shorter in duration than was care by a relative or centre care, averaging less than 10 months. The studies show that the care arrangement is most often terminated by parents rather than caregivers. The Metro Toronto study found that parents initiated termination 50 percent of the time due to changes in their employment or place of residence, 14 percent of the time because of a previously planned termination, and 10 percent of the time because of problems relating to the child's care.

Rights and Obligations of Caregivers Under the Income Tax Act

Child Care Centre Employees

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, child care centre workers are employees whose wages and working conditions are regulated by provincial or territorial employment standards legislation. Their employers must also comply with the provisions of the Income Tax Act, which requires the deduction of Canada or Quebec Pension Plan and unemployment insurance contributions and income tax. The employer matches C./Q.P.P. and Unemployment Insurance contributions. The centre employee is required to file an annual tax return.

Licensed and Unlicensed Caregivers Providing Child Care in Their Homes

Both licensed and unlicensed caregivers who provide child care in their own homes are self-employed, and therefore their earnings and working conditions are unregulated by provincial or territorial employment standards legislation. The federal and Quebec tax legislation oblige both licensed and unlicensed caregivers to remit Canada or Quebec Pension Plan contributions as well as income tax. These caregivers must also keep business records and file annual tax returns.

The income tax payable by caregivers who are operating a small business from their homes is paid on their net income remaining after the deduction of allowable operating expenses. Many caregivers working in their own homes are not aware of the deductions to which they are entitled for start-up and operating costs. Even if they are aware of the deductions, many are daunted by the extra paper work required to substantiate them, and are also frustrated by the lack of a clear policy and guidelines concerning some of the deductions.

The allowable expenses can be quite significant. In a study done for the Task Force, the authors provide an example of a home in which two infants and three preschoolers are being cared for (Power and Brown, 1985: 69-70, 81). Total estimated expenses amount to $7015 in this example. Operating expenses can be deducted for such things as food, activity materials, basic supplies for cleaning and first aid and general home maintenance costs. Deductions can also be made for automobile or transportation expenses and fees connected with outings.

Revenue Canada's policy on deductions for depreciation of capital property (called Capital Cost Allowances in the Act) was unclear at the time of publication. However, if treatment similar to that for other taxpayers is to apply, Capital Cost Allowances should be allowed on equipment such as a climber, which has a useful life of more than one year, as well as major appliances routinely used in the business, such as a washer and dryer.

Self-employed caregivers must keep records and have receipts available for verification. They must file an income statement and a balance sheet with their personal tax returns. This requirement is an onerous one for a person without bookkeeping experience, and may require the assistance of an accountant.

A further difficulty for the self-employed caregiver has been that in the past, Revenue Canada has not had a clear or uniform policy on operating expenses that may be claimed as business deductions. For example, some officials have accepted a simple per diem rate for food expenses, while others have required receipts. New guidelines are being developed by Revenue Canada for use in the 1985 tax year.

Caregivers working in their own homes who fail to comply with the requirements of the Income Tax Act to file tax returns, together with their spouses who illegally claim the married deduction on their returns, are subject to both civil and criminal penalties under the Act.

Revenue Canada informed the Task Force that it does not regularly cross-check files to actively seek out caregivers who carry on business without complying with the requirements in the Act. However, the Department's Special Investigation Branch has the power to audit any person suspected of failing to report income, and it may choose to do so at any time.

In 1975, Revenue Canada made a commitment in the federal Plan of Action on the Status of Women to publish, in 1979, a brochure outlining the rights and obligations of caregivers working in their own homes that would assist in the running of these small businesses. This commitment has not been met.

Caregivers Working in the Child's Home

Caregivers who work in the child's home may or may not have the protection of provincial or territorial employment standards legislation, depending upon the province in which they work. Foreign domestic workers and nannies receive some additional protection through the employer-employee contracts required by Canadian immigration authorities. However, for the purposes of the Income Tax Act, both Canadian and foreign caregivers in the child's home are employees, just as are child care centre workers. This means that the parent-employer must deduct and remit Canada or Quebec Pension Plan and Unemployment Insurance contributions, match these amounts, and remit them to Revenue Canada. They must also deduct income tax at source. This group of caregiver-employees must file annual tax returns like any other Canadian worker. However, the parent-employers cannot deduct the full cost of the employee's salary and benefits, because the Income Tax Act limits the child care deduction to $2,000 per child annually.

Conclusions

In the introduction to this chapter we indicated that child-rearing is a complex and difficult task requiring both knowledge and skill. People who care for children perform much more than a custodial function, requiring both nurturing and teaching capabilities. The quality of care they provide contributes directly to the development of children. Unfortunately, this occupation is rarely accorded the status it deserves in terms of community perception and remuneration. The 1979 report of the Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child, *For Canada's Children*, summarized the position of child care workers and caregivers:

> At present, child-care workers and other caregivers are chronically underpaid, largely because they replace parents who are paid nothing for their

> work as caregivers. A mother's work in the home is not counted in the gross national product, she receives no pension or benefits; and her experience counts for little in the job market. Society expects a mother's reward to be her joy in her work, and this attitude extends to child-care workers. But child care is important work, and those who care for children should be valued accordingly. (Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child, 1979: 29)

For workers in child care centres, working conditions vary considerably, depending on sponsorship of the centre in which they are employed. They have greater legislative protection than any other type of child care worker. Centre workers have opportunities for interaction with other child care professionals, which licensed family home caregivers and informal caregivers do not have. Centre workers generally have access to resources such as planning tools and other knowledgeable staff to aid in performing their jobs. Nonetheless, despite generally high education levels and a clear commitment to working with children, centre workers tend to work long hours with low pay and few benefits, sometimes contrary to provincial employment standards legislation. Moreover, they must combat an image that does not reflect their status as professional child care workers.

Caregivers in licensed family homes work under much less favourable conditions. Although they may receive some benefits through affiliation with an agency, their hours are longer than those of centre workers. They generally work for less than minimum wage and have virtually no job benefits unless they are associated with an agency. Agency association does not provide benefits such as paid lunch periods, breaks and vacations, health and pension scheme contributions, and workers' compensation. Benefits are largely provided in the form of services the agency makes available. In addition, these caregivers work in isolation and themselves absorb most of the expenses of providing the care.

Unlicensed caregivers are better off than caregivers in licensed family homes only if they have employee status and manage to squeeze into the limited protection of provincial employment standards legislation and statutory pension and Unemployment Insurance schemes. The unlicensed self-employed caregiver is in much the same position as is the licensed family home caregiver, minus even the limited advantages conferred by affiliation with an agency.

Foreign domestic workers in private Canadian homes are guaranteed at least the minimum age in the province/territory in which they work, as well as having some additional working conditions regulated by Employment and Immigration Canada. However, the Unemployment Insurance and pension benefits to which they contribute seem to be of little real benefit, given their unique, temporary residence in Canada.

Many child caregivers remain in the field because of compassion and dedication, not because of the financial return. Today, with an ever-increasing need for supplemental child care, the means must be found to accord caregiving the status and remuneration it deserves. Without such action, we may be hard pressed to find competent, dedicated and qualified caregivers at a time when they are required in increasing numbers.

Notes

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[1] See Figure 1.1, p. 7 in the Report of the Task Force on Child Care for a fuller description of different types of families by income earner(s). Two-earner families refer to married couples, with or without children, in which both spouses are income earners. In 1981, the breakdown of family types was: 16% one-earner couples: 11% single parents; 49% two-earner couples; and 24% of "other families" (includes families in which neither spouse is an income earner, and families with more than 2 income earners).

[2] Of 203 caregivers accredited by a recognized family home child care agency in Quebec and actually taking care of children in January 1982, 198 were sent questionnaires. Of this number, 122 questionnaires were eventually returned sufficiently completed to be used in the study. This group, therefore, constitutes a fairly representative sample of licensed family home caregivers in the province of Quebec.

[3] See Chapter Six of the Report for a discussion of the role identification of private home caregivers as an important determinant of the quality of care provided to children in the home.

[4] This situation may change in the near future. Two groups of family home caregivers in Ontario who are affiliated with licensed agencies have sought a ruling from the Ontario Labour Relations Board to declare them employees eligible to join the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

[5] Information supplied by the Women's Bureau, Labour Canada, May 1985.

[6] Paid vacation is a statutory requirement in all provinces, and if some workers do not receive this benefit their employers would be violating provincial law.

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3

Constructing Cultural Knowledge: Mothering as Discourse[1]

Alison I. Griffith and *Dorothy E. Smith*

Introduction

Mothering is usually thought of as an intimate relationship within which the well-being of a child is dependent on his or her biological mother. Much of our knowledge about mothering comes from our own experiences of mothering or of being mothered, and relies on an unexamined link between biology and social responsibility. Mothering is rarely investigated in terms of the work organization it produces or of the social organization which underpins and gives shape to our experience of it. When we begin to address mothering as a work process, it comes into view as a set of activities oriented to the child *and* to the institutional relations in which the family is embedded, for example, the compulsory mass education system.

The institutional order of the school requires particular activities to be accomplished within the home, a work organization usually managed and coordinated by mothers. At the primary educational level, an overtired or hungry child is unable to keep up with the morning's teaching program. In the later grades, a child living in a crowded space, who has limited times and resources has difficulty completing homework assignments. Where mothering work does not conform to the generalized requirements of schooling, or to the particularities of the classroom, it appears as inadequate mothering due to incompetence, or social deprivation (Griffith, 1984).

In this paper, we address mothering as a personal and emotional experience but also as work. We attend to the work organization through which individual mothering experiences are linked to the social and institutional fabric, particularly the school. By taking up mothering as a work organization, we can explore the interaction between an institutional work order such as the school and the material organization of the family.

This paper also addresses issues raised by feminist research, issues that have arisen for us out of our research project. First, we have been concerned with the methodological practices required for a feminist sociology from the standpoint of women. Second, in attending to our experience as mothers and as researchers inquiring into the social organization of mothering work, we have discovered the presence of a discourse on mothering;[2] a discourse which is

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integral to both our mothering experience and to our research experience. And finally, the examination of the mothering discourse has led us to the discovery of the standardization of mothering produced in the institutional ordering of the family-school relation. The standardization of mothering through discourse brings into view the social organization of class: an integral feature of the discursive organization of mothering.

A Sociology for Women: Research Issues

The women's movement, confronting an intellectual and cultural world largely made and certainly dominated by men, had at first no language for the experience of oppression. Women learned how to name their common oppression and discover it as oppression by sharing experiences in what came to be called "consciousness raising" groups. This insistence of women on speaking from their experience and for themselves has also been significant in the formulation of a feminist critique of social scientific methods. As Smith has noted, the objectifying methodologies in sociology deny the speech of women's experience in two ways. First, they substitute the categories and interpretations of an impersonal discourse for those of women themselves. People's experience is the basis of sociology, but what they have to say of themselves is transposed into the objectified forms of meaning created by sociology (Smith, 1974). Second, the forms of meaning provided by sociology are constructed from an almost exclusively male standpoint, a standpoint within the institutional complex which rules the society (Smith, 1979.) This standpoint is embedded in the sociological discourse, its objects, relevances and concepts – in part because sociology itself is a constituent of this institutional complex (Smith, 1979, 1974).

The feminist critique of social science has reinforced the ongoing critique of positivist sociology, insisting perhaps more forcefully and clearly than others on a sociology fully embedded in the social world.[3] As Hartsock describes it:

> a feminist standpoint emerges ... out of the contradiction between the systematically differing structure of male and female life activity in western cultures. It expresses female experience at a particular time and place, located in a particular set of social relations. (Hartsock, 1983: 303)

Feminist sociologists have been actively questioning established methods and seeking alternatives. We have sought ways of giving women's experience a voice in sociological discourse. In doing so we have broadened the conception of what this might mean, begun to confront and hopefully to overcome the discursive and political problems of such speech. The standpoint of women insists on the validity of women's right to speak for themselves of their experience.

Remaining faithful to the original speech of women has been important in extending the range of women's voices that are heard in sociology, but it has limitations. If we function merely as a medium through which women can be heard, we remain tied to the microcosms of the everyday world, of personal experience, of feeling. We are unable then to make available to women what a sociological discourse makes possible, namely, a capacity to investigate and analyze not only the social matrices of experience but also how the everyday, the personal, the level of feeling are embedded in larger social, economic and political relations. Confinement to the everyday world is a severe limitation on what we can offer women. On the other hand, feminist theory and methods proposed as alternatives too often replicate the strategies of established social sciences.[4] We share Stanley and Wise's rejection of the mere substitution of feminist for male theorizing where feminist theory imposes its interpretations of women's experience (Stanley and Wise, 1983).

The relations between a generalizing discourse and those whose experience it proposes to represent are unequal. It is all too easy for us as feminist sociologists to fall into speaking for women in the terms, contexts and relevances of a sociological discourse, a discourse which the women we claim to speak for have no power to shape. It is all too easy for us to find ourselves replicating in new forms precisely the relations we had sought to escape.

In our research, we have attempted to do a sociology for women; that is, a sociology that will express women's experience and yet embed our experience as women in the generalizing relations of the society (Smith, 1979.) The general aim is to explicate the social processes and practices organizing people's everyday experience. It means a sociology in which we do not transform people into objects but preserve their presence as subjects. It means taking seriously the notion of a sociology concerned with how phenomena are brought into being through the actual activities of individuals and of exploring how those activities are organized in social relations.[5] It means rejecting methods which begin with the categories of the discourse and which approach the social world with a view to discovering in the world the lineaments of the theoretical object. It means developing an inquiry that will disclose how activities are organized and articulated to the social relations of the larger social and economic processes.

It is our view that a sociology for women must be able to disclose for women how their own social situation is recognized. It must reveal to us how our everyday world is determined by social processes, which cannot be learned through the ordinary ways of discovering it. A sociology for women explores women's experience in the context of work organized by the complex of institutions through which power is exercised in our kind of society. Though the experience of individuals is unique, it is situated in social forms of relations that are, of their nature, generalized. Generalized social relations exist only as the forms in which people's activities are coordinated and concerted. Our concern is to explicate the social matrices of experience. We are particularly interested in the ways in which women enter into the concerting of the extended relations of the larger social, political and economic order; in the ways in which women's lives *shape and are shaped by* the social order.

Strategies such as these, however, leave an important problem unresolved. As we will see below, feminists have insisted on recognizing sociology's embeddedness in the society of which it speaks. Issues of the relation of sociology and of the feminist sociologist to the women with and for whom we do our research – and in particular to those women whose experience is a resource for our work as sociologists – remain unresolved. As we have seen in our own research, the practices of interviewing themselves produce the respondent's experience as object. Our analytic strategies have had no way of incorporating our own part in these processes into the study itself. In the following section, we will look at how these issues have been handled by other feminist researchers. Their work describes various strategies and solutions used to address the methodological problems described above.

Feminists have been sensitive to issues of the unequal relation between researcher and respondent. They have proposed solutions that seek to reconstruct the relationship. For example, Mies (1983) attempted to handle this problem by breaking down the relationship. Research, rather than being the specialized task of the researcher, was distributed among researcher and "subjects" who collectively undertook responsibility for the research task. This is an interesting strategy that provides an important model. But it has severe limitations if we are to be able to offer women a "sociology," i.e., a body of knowledge that accounts to them for the properties and organization of structures of power, of economy and of discourse shaping our everyday experience. This requires specialized methods and procedures; it requires "expertise."

Oakley has taken another tack. Suggesting that we recognize the necessarily interactive character of the relationship, she criticizes the "predominantly masculine model of sociology and society," which is reflected in the separation of the interviewer from the data gathered through the interviews. This, she notes:

> has led to an unreal theoretical characterization of the interview as a means of gathering sociological data which cannot and does not work in practice. (Oakley, 1981:31)

Since the personal component cannot be excluded, it should be explicit. The objectifying criteria of social scientific research should be "replaced by the recognition that personal involvement is more than dangerous bias – it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives" (Oakley, 1981:58). She proposes that the researcher freely engage with respondents, speaking personally, responding to their needs for advice and information as she can appropriately.

McRobbie (1982) has sharply criticized strategies such as these. She says that "the most sensitive issue" is:

> the nature of the relationship between the researcher and researched, a relationship paralleling in its unequal power that of social worker and client, or teacher and pupil. (McRobbie, 1982:51)

While in our view she exaggerates the power differences between researcher and respondent, there is no question that the institutional relations of discourse organize the relationship between interviewer and respondent, giving the interviewer a special authority. Whether she likes it or not, the researcher participates in that order and her interviews and their uses are embedded in its relations. Certainly in our encounters with those we interview, we are seen as representatives of "authority." The issues of method, of how to give speech to women's experience, do not address this problem.

Our experience as mothers is situated in a research discourse in which we play a subordinate part. By contrast, when we enter our role as researchers, we function on the other side – as representatives of the institutional order. The ironies with which we and others, such as McRobbie, have been concerned, are projected into the research context by the women's movement. We want to speak and function as researchers in ways that do not violate a level of knowledge[6] originating in individuals' actual, local experience: outside the modes of ruling. At the same time we are doing research and, though we wrench them into different forms, we still work within the canons and conventions of an academic discourse. If we are to advance our capacity to do feminist research, these ironies must be analyzed not as moral dilemmas but as experiences arising in the context of social relations and organization; that is, they must be analyzed as integral parts of the same relations we are concerned as feminists to explicate. In the next sections, we will describe some of the strategies we have used to address these ironies in the feminist research process.

Doing Research

In devising the project and in conducting it, we have consciously included ourselves and our experience as mothers. In developing the interview schedule, we "interviewed" each other, talking out everything we could recall for each other of the work we had done as mothers in relation to our children's schooling. Although the overall methodological strategies are a feminist innovation, the routine practices of our research, particularly the interview procedures are fairly standard.[7] Partly taking a consciously principled methodological approach adopted in recognition of our own historical presence in the research process, and partly relying on an unthought ordinary responsiveness, we have deployed our own experiences as mothers to establish "rapport" by indicating shared experiences and a common knowledge of typical situations, problems, etc. In the interviews, we used phrases such as: "When my children were small, I . . ."; or: "When the teacher called to discuss problems, I often felt . . ."; Apart from these minor personal incursions, we have not attempted to modify the ways in which the interview is conducted in any radically innovative direction. We have not sought to give ourselves a more active and visible presence in the transcribed products of the interview process.

But feminist strategies of research tell us to attend to our experience and to be conscious of the research process as a relationship. Hence when we became aware of things going on in the interview situation with ourselves which did not register in the interviews as such, we decided to try to understand them as also part of the phenomena we were exploring. Some of these experiences, recounted below, correspond to those described by Oakley.

1. We found that occasionally mothers asked our advice. Here is an example from our notes:

> I had an interview with a working class mother whose child was having difficulty in school. Ms. Dexter had 3 other children but her talk and attention kept coming back to this one son who was having such a hard time. During the interview, she asked me whether I thought she should move her son to another classroom or whether she should let him stay there and work it out. Ms. Dexter insisted, in her own non-assertive way, that I engage with her in a discussion of strategies which might fix the problem.[8]

The mother's questions arose out of the discussion of her children's schooling and her work organization. Her insistence on the topic of her child's difficulties in the school was framed within the context of the interviewer as representative of an "expert" knowledge of the educational process. This became part of the mother's strategies for dealing with a school process she did not understand and did not know how to evaluate. Her questions revolved around issues of what to do that would *fix* the problem. She took for granted that there are things a mother can do to alleviate her child's problem and things she can do that will make it worse. Expert advice was sought as guidance in making the *right* choice of strategy. This was an uncomfortable situation for the interviewer who felt no better equipped than the mother herself to know what should be done and certainly had no knowledge of the particular school. But even though this discomfort was expressed, advice was sought and, when cautiously and tentatively given, was added to the fund of knowledge Ms. Dexter was collecting.

How does an incident of this kind contribute to our understanding of the social organization of the relationship between mother and schooling? Clearly Ms. Dexter took for granted (as did we in the interview setting) that it was her responsibility to find a solution to her child's problem and that her responsibility was such that it was appropriate to discuss it with the researcher who appeared at the door. But her son's problem was in the classroom, not at home. Would she have consulted us about a behavioural problem in the home? That would have been unusual, quite outside our expectations. More importantly, her talk about her son's problem and her search for ways of fixing it assumed that her responsibility extended into a situation to which she had no direct access. This was clearly an understanding shared by both mother and teacher. In the interview, the mother described interactions with the school in which both the mother and the teacher expected that she would find some way to change the child's behaviour and therefore alleviate the classroom problem. In the interview context, responding to her request for advice, the interviewer also took this for granted. The mother's absence from the classroom, her lack of control over the classroom situation, her lack of direct knowledge of what the child was doing, sharply limited her ability to intervene, but did not prevent the assigning of responsibility for the problem to her by the teacher, the interviewer and the mother herself.

This instance shows us a complex of practices which cannot be ascribed to purely particularistic relationships between mother and child. They belong in a space in which interviewer, mother and teacher and the others Ms. Dexter consulted (her husband, friends, kin) share assumptions about her responsibility for taking some action to solve the problem. This conception of responsibility is clearly organized both within the personal interaction of Ms. Dexter with her child, her husband, her friends, etc. It is also organized externally to that local complex of relationships. It is organized extra-locally in the assumptions of the teaching and administrative staff of the school and in the work organization of a school system which relies on the work of mothers to monitor the child's schooling and initiate repair sequences within the home to alleviate a problem arising in the school. (Griffith and Smith, 1985) We are talking about practices which are situated in an extra-local institutional order, which any of us know how to pick up and work with in appropriate contexts: mothers, teachers, researchers and other members of the society.

2. In the interview, Ms. Dexter's almost obsessive preoccupation with the merits of various strategies seemed generated by anxiety about what was happening to her son, an anxiety produced in the dual context of a responsibility that extended to his behaviour in the classroom while depriving her of direct practicable means of intervention. Similar strong "personal" feelings of concern, of guilt and anxiety, organized by the practices of an institutional order appeared in other contexts of our interviewing. Among them were those of our own personal experience.

We found sometimes that the work of interviewing mothers was more than usually emotionally exhausting. As we have noted above, our project came out of our experience as mothers in relation to our children's schooling. Its topics revived those experiences for us. Sometimes we responded to what they said with incidents from our own experience, trying, as we were, to establish our shared experience as mothers as a common ground for the interview. And of course, as we listened to women telling us about their own work as mothers, we also silently reflected on our experiences in the light of theirs. Sometimes this was painful. Sometimes our own practices as mothers compared unfavourably with a mother's account of her work. Sometimes feelings of guilt were evoked with the feeling of having done our own mothering inadequately. Talking with other mothers about their work as mothers in relation to their children's schooling revived concerns about our own mothering which had never fully subsided. Here is an account of one mother who created these kinds of feelings for Alison.

> Ms. Fisher has a child who is in the French Immersion Program at a school in a middle class area. The mother has an advanced degree and her husband works in an academic institution. She does not work outside the home. Her interview described the extensive time and energy she spends on her children; for the time being she considers them her job. She organizes car pools so that they are always supervised on their community activities. She takes them to Stratford to the Festival. The children, who are already familiar with some of Shakespeare's plays, help to choose the ones they will attend. She is active in the Home-School Association and any problems which arise in the classroom for her children are taken up without delay with the teacher and the principal.

This account of Ms. Fisher drawn from our field notes might make many mothers feel inadequate. Her experience is certainly in contrast to that of a sole-support parent living on an inadequate income. Both of us were single parent mothers. Both of us have had the experience of ourselves and our children being treated in these terms. We learned to be aware of our essential defects as "single-parents"[9] arising from membership in that category rather than from any definite patterns of parenting. At the same time, the realities are that the work required of mothers by the school is difficult to do under conditions of sole-support mothering. This is made additionally problematic for the sole-support mother when she is working on an inadequate income.

In writing up the field notes from the interview later, Alison became aware of how her own experience was shaping the account (above) of Ms. Fisher. Indeed, the interview had precipitated strong feelings which began to appear in the notes themselves. As the fieldnote went on, Alison described her response to Ms. Fisher and to the comparison between Ms. Fisher's mothering work and her own:

> And where was I in all this? I was feeling that I hadn't done my own mothering *properly*. I had let my children watch T.V.; they'd never been taken to a Shakespearian play; when I was upset with the school, I had never managed to make things better for my children and indeed, at times made it worse; etc. In other words, my mothering, in relation to other women's mothering, appeared to be less than adequate on almost every count. As a consequence, I was finding the interview process very difficult emotionally.

We could see in this a familiar procedure. There were very good reasons why Alison's mothering practices had been different from Ms. Fisher's. She lacked Ms. Fisher's parenting facilities, time and opportunities. But characteristically, this did not excuse her, did not remove her sense of guilt. The ideals of mothering in the context of schooling and the mother's responsibility for realizing them are absolute. The practicalities of the contexts and conditions of mothering did not appear to modify the interpretation of a mother's responsibility for her child's schooling. Experiences of this kind, when we reflected on them, showed us a strongly moral dimension governing the relationship of mothers to the school, capable of generating an almost theological sense of guilt and anxiety. Our question then became as follows: Is mothering organized in relationship to schooling as the social relational matrix of such experiences?

3. Having made these observations of our strikingly emotional experiences, we returned to our interviews to see whether there were aspects of the same moral organization of mothering for schooling there. We found it appearing in how mothers described and reflected on their work in "apologetic" terms and phrases used to mark deviations from the paradigmatic mother. Notable again is that such an apologetic marking is appropriate even when the conditions of mothering are such as to make conformity to the paradigm impossible.

Ms. Apple is a nurse who works part time at a hospital in her neighbourhood. She works proportionally more night shifts than the full time nurses and her shift work hours make child care and babysitters a constant juggling act. Having described how she tries to keep up with reading to the children, she mentions, apologetically, the ways in which her employment interferes with this:

> No, I'm really a basket case on nights. I just don't have the energy or whatever to read to them or do anything with them . . . .

In the context of the interview, Ms. Apple reflects on her inability in terms of standards of mothering which are consistently eroded by the demands of her nursing job. The standard includes reading to the children on a nightly basis. During her graveyard shifts, she is not able to manage this. She blames no one but herself: she is the guilty party. By implication, if she could only muster up more energy she'd still be able to meet the standards she ought to be realizing. The conditions of her paid employment, of the level of her husband's earnings, of the lack of adequate childcare facilities, etc. do not appear as relevant to or responsible for the situation.

On the basis of even these few examples, we can trace some aspects of the social organization of the relations we are exploring. We see the disparity of control and responsibility; the deference to standards taken to be held in common; the categorical character of the standards, taking no account of practicalities and conditions; the ways in which mothers compare their own practices with others in relation to a moral or normative standard. These are practices in which we as researchers and as mothers have been implicated. The standards are organized extra-locally in a discourse on parenting and on child development, a discourse which sets up the parameters for "normal" child development and the parenting required to develop and maintain that normalcy (Chambouredon and Prevot, 1975; Griffith, 1984). It is an organization of relations beyond the local settings of our interviews, ourselves as interviewers and the particular women we talked to.

The Mothering Discourse: In Relation to Schooling

We suggest that these observations and experiences have their site in a "mothering" discourse. By discourse we mean an organization of relations among people participating in a conversation mediated by written and printed materials. A discourse has a social organization of authorities, sites, production processes, etc. It does not consist only of "statements" but of ongoing interchanges among "experts" doing research and developing theories in the context of universities and similar sites, the training of teachers in the theories and categories thus developed. The discourse provides the working language coordinating teachers' classroom experience with that of other educators and administrators; it provides material for the writing of newspaper stories and materials for women's magazines; it links the preparation of courses in high school and colleges to practices of reading and learning on the part of professional and lay practitioners (mothers), etc. As we are using it, the term does not just refer to the "texts" of this conversation and their production alone, but also to the ways in which people organize their activities in relationship to them.[10] As mothers orient towards the texts (whether in books, women's magazines, television, radio, or by participating in "second-hand" textually organized processes such as courses, church meetings, etc.) in how they do their work in relationship to their children's schooling, in how they measure what they do in terms of its standards, in how they interpret and orient to what other mothers do in its terms, etc., they are participating in this discursive process.

Thus, the paradigm of the ideal mother constructed in relation to her children's schooling, the operation of invidious comparisons among mothers, our own recognition of ourselves as defective mothers (by virtue of our being sole-support mothers), the curious moral structuring of responsibility for the child's behaviour in the school unsupported by corresponding control, etc., are moments in the practice of a discourse through which the educational role of mothers has been and still is coordinated with that of school. The duality of our own experience, as representatives of the discourse to the mothers we interview and as mothers ourselves, becomes visible as a feature of the discursive organization of mothering.

The History of the Mothering Discourse

The discourse of mothering emerges distinctly towards the end of the 19th century (Lewis, 1980; Davin, 1978) and enlarges and develops with the advance of public schooling (David, 1980). It provides systematically developed knowledges, recommendations, systems of categories and concepts, which coordinate the division of labour of a universalized public educational system and the family, producing the kind of children needed in twentieth century capitalism. Key to these distinctive properties of its organization is the standardization of parenting practices in the context of increasingly standardized educational organization.

The discourse of mothering supports a standard family organization: the complete nuclear family. No concessions are made to variations in the practical and material contexts of mothering work or to the realities of a mother's ability to control the school situation in which her child works during the day. Exposure to guilt, invidious comparisons, and anxiety: all are constant hazards for mothers participating in the discourse. The child who does not read on time, who does not behave in ways that fit the classroom order established by the teacher in conjunction with the particular groups of students, who does not fit in well with her peers, who is going through a difficult time for whatever reasons, invites – via the discourse – her mother to scrutinize her own mothering practices for what is wrong. A mother's knowledge of how to take responsibility is complemented by that of the teacher who knows as a matter of her professional membership in the same or an intersecting discourse how to allocate responsibility to her. We can see this at work in our earlier account of Ms. Dexter's experience when her son was having problems in the classroom. Both she and the teacher apparently shared a common understanding that the primary responsibility for modifying his behaviour in the classroom was hers.

The notion of standardization, here, does not mean an obliteration of individuality but the production by the family of a standard level of functioning within the school, which is, or can be presupposed, in the work organization of the classroom.[11] The standardized curriculum, which it is the teacher's business to work with in the classroom, presupposes students who already have a background of competences of certain kinds. In the elementary classroom in particular, certain "basic" levels of functioning may not be met because "mothers have not done their job."

Discourse, in seeking to standardize parenting practices in relation to children's schooling, articulates to a class structure. Its recommendations do not recognize what mothers do as work, hence do not attend to the material and social conditions of that work as modifiers. It enables the standardization of curriculum in ways that ensure the reproduction of class differences in children. The discourse of mothering defines the boundaries of the school's responsibility for the child's education, concealing the parameters of the educational budget and its allocation. The paradigmatic mothering of the discourse matches middle-class, not working-class, resources. Our own sense of guilt, experienced in the interview setting and informing our analytic work, is in part situated in the practicalities of being a sole-support mother and unable therefore to function fully (try as we would) as full-time middle-class mothers.

The Organization of Classes

Our discussion of mothering as a discursively organized practice has returned us to the topic of class and how class differences are reproduced through the educational process. We can spell out the transgenerational reproduction of class in how career-structured occupations enable a man to earn enough to reserve his wife's labour from the labour force and to provide the material and social conditions under which her mothering can be exercised to its fullest effect. The middle-class parent can afford (or has in the past afforded) a suburban house with a social environment of those like themselves who maintain similar standards and styles of childrearing and in a school district in which appropriate kinds of schooling are available. And they are members of a class which, through its greater control over the political process, has been able to influence school policies and to ensure in general that a proportionately larger part of the state investment in education becomes an investment in the education of the middle classes. The significance for the overall process of the transgenerational continuity of the middle-class section of the dominant classes is less the effect of these work processes and their social organization on individual children *than on the general level at which the schooling process can go forward.* The work organization of the classroom and the extent to which the teacher can institute types of teaching activities producing middle-class levels of achievement depends greatly upon much of the prior and supplementary work of mothers. At the kindergarten and primary level, much of what the teacher can do depends upon the children in her charge being competent in such matters as the use of scissors, paint, paste, being able in general to discriminate colours, and hence to follow instructions in these terms, etc. (Manicom, 1981).

Situating the work organization of mothering for schooling in its material conditions directs us to differences in how this relation works in differing class contexts and hence is part of the social organization of class reproduction. Among the middle classes, privileged access to occupations with the possibilities of career advancement have come to substitute for inheritance in ensuring the transgenerational continuities of class. A family organization making it possible for mothers to invest considerable time and skills in the "development" of children in relation to education is an essential part of this process (with the occasional alternative of sufficient income to hire specialists for this purpose). Middle-class mothers' skills have been generally acquired through prior investment (both state and private) in advanced training, giving them access to the psychological and child-developmental knowledge facilitating the coordination of mothering and schooling. The career process and the accumulation of personal wealth ensures the material conditions, the settings, the equipment and other means as well as the choice of school in which teachers can function on the assumption that mothering in the school catchment area will enable the middle-class classroom to function as such.

For example, Ms. Evans and Ms. Fisher, both middle-class mothers, work in the home and consider their work in the family as their job. They are able to take their children to cultural and social events regularly and contribute some of their time while the children are in school to the organization of schooling – volunteering, helping out on school trips, organizing the Home and School Association as a pressure group reflecting parental concerns about the quality of education and the availability of particular educational programs, such as French Immersion. By contrast, a working-class mother is likely to have less available time. She will not be able to substitute paid domestic service for her own labour or, to a lesser extent, for labour embodied in commodities. She is more likely to have to take paid employment. Her mothering skills, particularly those articulated to systematic knowledge of child development, will represent a lower level of investment in education (both state and private). These are effects for the individual child, but perhaps more importantly, for the conditions under which classroom work can be organized. The working class neighbourhood creates different conditions for the work organization of the classroom as a whole and hence for the local school process (Manicom, 1981). Ms. Apple, Ms. Baker and Ms. Dexter all engage in mothering work that includes the immediate possibility of paid labour. Accordingly, they have to face ongoing scheduling problems that arise in coordinating the relation between paid labour and mothering work for schooling. Regardless of their skill at replicating the conditions of mothering described in the schooling discourse cited above, the work must be done within the material conditions of juggling paid labour, stretched finances and a relation to the school which is not collegially organized. If Ms. Evans or Ms. Fisher are unhappy with the classroom teacher or the way the school is being run, they speak to the administrative staff, organize lobbies and/or remove their child from the public school system. If Ms. Apple, Ms. Baker or Ms. Dexter encounter what appear to be insurmountable difficulties, the alternatives for education do not extend to the private school system and at times do not even extend to removing the child from a classroom within which they are unhappy.

Thus, the way in which the discourse on mothering enters into the organization of class and the reproduction of class through the educational process returns us to the problems posed at the outset as problems of methodology. The division of labour in socializing and educating children has come to be defined in ways that take for granted middle-class family knowledge, time and resources. What may properly be considered the work of parents (and mothers in particular) and the boundaries of school responsibility has been and continues to be negotiated within a discourse that presupposes middle-class resources and familial organization. The same division of labour between school and home applies also in contexts where the middle-class material and skill resources do not exist. Participation in discourse ensures that educational authorities, school, parents, and voters will see the problem of class differentiation in the school as the differential educational efficacy of families and in particular of mothers.

This is the consistent message of the extensive literature on the relationship between family and school achievement, which is fully a part of the discourse with which we are concerned. The findings of social scientists such as Coleman (1966) that family variations rather than schooling in itself account for differences in individual school achievement presupposes the division of labour that has been given textual presence as an ideology by the discourse of mothering. The objectifying practices of social science, taking this division of labour between school and home for granted, interpret the relationship between them as casual relations. As this is taken up as part of the practical discourse of mothering, it is interpreted as responsibility, concealing the operation of class.

Concluding Remarks

Doing research is a process of discovery, both substantive and methodological. Our interviews with mothers have provided the foundation for our school-based interviews as well as for our advances in refining the formulation of the research problematic: what it means to do a sociology for women. The interview process has also provided the ground for our discoveries of the moral or normative ordering of women's work as mothers. As we saw above, the mothering discourse informs and gives shape to the work of mothers in relation to the elementary school as well as to the memories and knowledge of the researchers. Including ourselves in the research process has provided us with knowledge about mothering that would not otherwise be available.

We have been exploring the dilemmas of feminist research as we have experienced them in our study: dilemmas that we have seen are, in part, embedded in the social organization of a discourse integral to educational institutions. Our experiences as researchers, as mothers – as our dialogues with the women we have interviewed show – no longer appear as isolated moral events, but as practices within the social organization of a discourse coordinating mothers' work in the home with the work of the school. Our work as feminists confronts the stable organization of power within that discourse, which subordinates women's work as mothers to the authority of educational experts. The feminist project works both from outside and within the discourse to reshape it. It seeks to give voice to a position within which it is suppressed. Whereas the objectified forms of knowledge produce representations of family and mothering from the standpoint of those who govern, our work as feminists seeks to build a knowledge of the institutional relations of power from the standpoint of those who are governed.

Our current study begins to show the direction of the research to be done. Our methodology reminds us that research is a political process that requires the development of an alternative knowledge: a feminist knowledge. Building an alternative knowledge is one step but one step only. Reshaping discourse so that those who are subjugated within it will have a voice entails a reorganization of power beyond the research enterprise.

Notes

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[2] The term "discourse" draws on Foucault's usage to indicate a conversation in and between texts. We have expanded the term to describe a textually-mediated form of social organization embedded in and facilitating the work of managing, administering and ordering the everyday social world. For further discussion, see below, "The Mothering Discourse."

[3] See Mies' formulation (1983). She notes that feminist social science has been one of the major critical approaches eroding positivist claims to social scientific knowledge.

[4] See, for example, the articles by Jayaratne (1983) and Reinharz (1983) who, despite their methodological differences, remain tied to the conceptual strategies of the established social sciences. Both researchers suggest methodological refinements which would transform the concerns of women into those of social science. Our methodological strategy is one which brings into view those transformative processes as one aspect of the ways through which our society is managed and administered. Thus, their attempts to rethink methodology from a feminist perspective are flawed by the same conceptual procedures they criticize.

[5] Social relations are a complex coordination of actions beyond the scope of any one individual's experience but requiring the participation of individuals in those concerted activities for their accomplishment.

[6] Perhaps corresponding to Foucault's notion of subjugated knowledges.

[7] We are using open-ended interview methods guided by topics rather than specific questions. We have interviewed six women in one city and 12 in another. In the first set of interviews, we met with the women twice in most cases and in one three times: a total of 25 hours of interviewing. The second set of interviews were much more structured and gave us another 25 hours of tape to work with.

[8] The data gathered for the project consists of transcriptions of taped interviews plus fieldnotes made to capture some aspect of the interview not present on the tape recordings.

[9] As Griffith has shown, in the work organization of institutions constructing the ruling apparatus, the concept "single-parent" is an ideological category identifying families who are 'deficient' vis a vis the educational system because they do not have the full complement of family members. (Griffith, 1984)

[10] See Alison Griffith, (1984) for an analysis of the concept of "single parent" as constituent of an educational discourse with multiple sites – administration, school, newspapers, etc.

[11] An article in the Toronto Star (Tuesday, August 27, 1985:B1) is an example of the standardizing features of the mothering discourse which structures particular versions of mothering work in relation to the work organization of the school. The article cites teachers, health consultants, a principal and a school psychologist. The article makes specific recommendations which, if followed by all parents, would mean that the teacher in the kindergarten class would confront a more homogeneous work environment with children already prepared to engage directly with the classroom work. It also orients parents (and they will for the most part be mothers) towards the discourse and its local representatives and authorities.

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Introduction to Part Two: Unequal Access to Knowledge

"Educational opportunity" is a fundamental if controversial and shifting concept for educators. Few would disagree that all children should have an equal chance at an education. Few would agree on exactly what this implies (Marcil-Lacoste, 1984; Fennema and Ayer, 1984). Most of the research and debate about equal opportunity has taken place in relation to social class and sometimes, in the United States, race (Coleman, 1968; Levine and Bane, 1975; Oakes, 1985). Looking at it from the point of view of gender equality raises some new issues, while continuing to engage some of the old debates.

Feminists have always demanded equality of opportunity for women. But the meanings of this have have shifted over time, and continue to vary with the political position of the analyst. For early feminists, equality of opportunity meant, in its most basic form, the right to attend all educational institutions. Royce (1975) documents the arguments that were used when Ontario's Superintendent of Education, Egerton Ryerson tried to stop local school boards from admitting girls to grammar schools and the study of Latin in 1865. George Paxton Young, the inspector of grammar schools, argued that:

> There is a very considerable diversity between the mind of a girl and that of a boy; and it would be rash to conclude that, as a matter of course, the appliances which are best adapted for bringing the faculties of reflection and taste to their perfection in one must be the best also in the case of the other . . . they are not studying Latin with any definite object. They have taken it up under pressure . . . there is a danger of grown up girls suffering as respects the formation of their moral character, from attending school along with grown up boys (Prentice and Houston, 1975: 253-55).

Young's arguments did not prevail over the economic interest of local school boards in coeducation. Recruiting more girls mean recruiting more pupils, and therefore getting more money for the grammar schools. In rural areas particularly, the main impetus for coeducation was not sexual equality, but financial stability (see also Rosenberg, 1982). Since sexual equality was not one of the aims of educators, the admission of women to higher education and professional training took more time and struggle (Gillett, 1981; Strong-Boag, 1979). Even admission to teacher training in the Toronto normal school was not granted without a fight. Universities were considered "a male sphere, a place of serious learning that fitted men for positions in the public world. Women's entrance into the university was considered at best irrelevant, and more likely detrimental, to women's future roles as wives and mothers" (Marks and Gaffield, 1986). Women who finally won admittance to universities on an equal basis with men challenged the validity of the stereotypes of women and began an assault on male educational power.

When women won formal equality and were allowed entrance to all university programs, the fight for equal opportunity did not end. Since the public re-emergence of feminism in the late 1960's, women have argued that equal opportunity for women entails extensive social and educational changes in order to allow women to participate on equal terms with men. Equality of opportunity means a good deal more than formally equal access.

The Deficit Model

In the early sixties, the educational community was forced to re-examine the idea of equal educational opportunity. It was clear that children from poor families had a persistent disadvantage in schools. Large scale research studies showed that family background predicted school success (Coleman, 1966; Jencks, 1972), and that school success predicted adult jobs (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Porter 1965). Massive intervention projects were mounted to attack the educational deficits of disadvantaged children, in the hope of eliminating, or at least reducing, poverty. These programs that would teach poor children the skills they needed at school but had not picked up in their homes as had more materially privileged youngsters.

This model held appeal for feminists, who argued that girls too were disadvantaged in school. The evidence for women's disadvantage was twofold. First, they were less likely than men to go on to higher education. Secondly, the earned much less than men. In 1970, only a third of university students were women, and full time women wage earners earned only 50% of what men earned. By 1983, women were almost equally represented at university, but they still earned 59 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. Feminists suggested that girls similarly lacked some of the skills and personal attributes necessary for success, and that society, through the school, had a responsibility to deal with these problems in order to give girls an equal opportunity.

As a result of the deficit model, much of the research in the 1960's and 70's was focussed on pinpointing women's problems. A large literature on "sex differences" amounted to an attempt to explain what it was about women that led to their lack of achievement (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). The fear was that little girls who learned to be quiet, to be feminine and to put other people's needs first would not become intellectually aggressive enough to excel at school. "Girls are discouraged from growing into intellectually inquisitive, independent and self-assured persons. They are inhibited with regard to the acquisition of qualities that are highly valued in our society, and therefore are prevented from mastering the skills and achieving the status that would allow them to participate in the power structure" (Henschel, 1973).

When in 1968 Horner published her research on the "fear of success" in high achieving college women, it was widely heralded (Horner, 1968; 1970). In her study, Horner gave students the following written cue: "At the end of first term finals, Anne was at the head of her medical school class" and she asked them to write about Anne. Horner observed that women described Anne as unfeminine, unattractive, and unlikely to succeed. Some sample responses were: "Hard-working, devoted. Wears long skirts. Not feminine; tall, straight. Doesn't go out" or "Anne will deliberately lower her academic standing the next term while she does all she subtley can to help Carl (her boyfriend). His grades come up and Anne soon drops out of medical school. They marry and he goes on in school while she raises their family". Students who was wrote about "John," who at the head of his medical school class, described him as attractive, successful and very marriageable.

Horner concluded that femininity and achievement are in conflict. "It is clear that a psychological barrier exists in otherwise achievement-motivated and able women that prevents them from exercising their rights and fulfilling their potential. Even when legal and educational barriers to achievement are removed, the motive to avoid success will continue to inhibit women from doing 'too well' – thereby risking the possibility of being socially rejected as 'unfeminine' or 'castrating'" (1970: p. 72).

Any number of other characteristics of women could be held responsible for women's lack of attainment at school and work. Ability and aptitude, personality characteristics, family background and support, attitudes towards gender, and aspirations were all explored. Research on achievement motivation (Kaufman and Richardson, 1982), on sex role attitudes (Porter, Porter and Blishen, 1982); Gaskell, 1977) and on brain lateralization and hormonal influence were all attempts to find out what it was that made women different from men, and what might explain their lower achievement.

The deficit model suggests remedial programs designed to make women more like men. It leads to assertiveness training programs, to remedial math and science programs, to career counselling that points out that women too participate in the labour force, and must plan for careers. All of these innovations require resources, attention to the problems of women and a commitment to equality. They have been important to many women and girls.

But the deficit model has a variety of problems. It ignores social structures; it devalues female achievement, and it misrepresents the connections between education and the gender segregated labour market. An increase in research and shifting political climate brought these concerns to the feminist research community. The new research that emerged will be briefly outlined in the next three sections. What becomes clear is that the dynamics of gender inequality are different from, as well as similar to, the dynamics of class and race inequality, and that each has to be explored on its own terms.

Blaming the System: Rethinking the Deficit

The literature on the deficits in women ignores the impact of social and educational structures, assuming their constancy while concentrating instead on the differing characteristics of individuals. By locating the causes of women's inequality in themselves, documenting what is wrong with them, rather than what is wrong with the world in which they must operate, this literature "blames the victim" (Ryan, 1971).

An alternative is to look for problems in the "system", instead of in "the victim", to focus on the way the provision of education is stacked against girls and women, and to recommend eliminating gender bias in what goes into education, or even more radically, to focus on eliminating the gender bias in results.

The extensive research on sex stereotyping in texts, in teachers' attitudes, and in classroom practices, which was discussed in the introduction to this book constitutes a massive indictment of the sexism of the "inputs" in the educational system. This research reveals a "chilly climate for women" (Project on the Status and Education of Women, 1982) in many classrooms. The goal of this research and the political practice based on it has been to produce an education where differential treatment is eliminated and girls and boys are treated alike. This involves attitude change among teachers, but it also involves administrative restructuring, curriculum reform and widespread social change.

This research is concerned with the equality of what goes into the educational setting – texts, curriculum, teachers' attitudes and actions. But many would now argue that getting rid of overt discrimination and treating everyone in the same way is not enough. Educators need to be concerned with producing equal results, equal achievement for all children even if this means treating them differently. For example, exposing blind children to the same curriculum as seeing children does not give them an equal opportunity. Rosalie Abella (1984) in her important Royal Commission report on equal employment opportunity argued that "to treat everyone the same may be to offend the notion of equality ... it is nor fair to use the differences between people as an excuse to exclude them arbitrarily from equal participation... ignoring differences and refusing to accommodate them is a denial of equal access and opportunity."

Abella proposes an attack on "systemic" discrimination, arguing that institutions must be adaptable to women's needs and produce equal results for women, as well as for other disadvantaged groups. She suggests that all institutions collect statistics on women's performance, in order that problem areas can be seen and attacked. The institutions would then be held responsible for producing equity in whatever ways this could be accomplished. The New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women (1984), for example, applies the concept of equality of results to education. They propose analyzing the participation of male and females in every program and, if they are not equal, attacking the problem in a myriad of ways "for if equality of results is not occurring, then, quite simply, the system is failing"(p.8). Accountability rest with educators, they must find ways to educate everyone equally.

Valuing the Female: Rethinking Achievement

Looking for ways to explain and improve women's levels of achievement assumes that women do achieve less than men. But it is not at all clear that they do. Concern for women's lack of educational attainment obscures the fact that women perform as well if not better than men in school.

Early research emphasized university graduation, where women do less well than men, rather than high school graduation, where women out-perform men. Debates about how poorly women perform in math and science depend partly on whether one looks at school grades, where girls do well, or at standardized test scores, where they do less well.

The educational attainment of men and women in Canada is now virtually equal. Men in 1981 had, on the average 11.9 years of schooling. Women, on the average had 11.8 years of schooling. In 1971, men had 10.5 years and women had 10.6. Girls tend to get better grades than boys in school, and to drop out of high school less often. This difference was much more pronounced in the past than it is today. In 1900 in B.C. women were 63% of all secondary students. Only in 1950 did the number of males aged 15-19 catch up with the number of girls aged 15-19 in school.

Whether women do or do not achieve as much as men depends partly on what counts as achievement. Feminists have increasingly mounted an assault on the male-oriented scales used to evaluate performance and an argument that they discount the skills and abilities women have.

While many have argued girls perform less well on tests of moral reasoning, Gilligan (1982) argues that the schemes used to evaluate their answers do not reflect the ways women tackle moral dilemmas. On the other measures, girls do just fine. Belenky et al (1986) argue that women's "ways of knowing" are different from men's and are devalued by the educational institutions and measures that men have devised.

> Relatively little attention has been given to modes of learning, knowing and valuing that may be specific to, or at least common in, women. It is likely that the commonly accepted stereotype of women's thinking as emotional, intuitive and personalized has contributed to the devaluation of women's minds and contributions, particularly in Western technologically oriented cultures, which value rationalism and objectivity." (p.6)

While females are often measured against males on standards of achievement that do no reflect their strengths, there are also times when men and women, girls and boys do not compete against each other directly because they are segregated in to "male" and "female" areas. The result is that achievement in female areas counts less than achievement in male areas.

The extensive gender segregation of schools, and of the workplace, means that men and women work and study in different areas. Women achieve in the humanities; men in science. Women achieve in typing; men in woodworking. The areas in which men study and work have higher prestige than the areas in which women study and work. Graduates from engineering earn more than graduates from nursing. Wage rates are higher for plumbers than for secretaries. It is clear that people with credentials in "male" areas get paid more, and exercise more power as adults. For this reason there has been an emphasis on achieving in male domains, on getting women into male areas of endeavour.

Feminism calls for re-assessment of the value of female achievement, and of the scales that are used to measure it. Feminists have argued that teachers' grades rather than standardized test should be used to determine scholarship winners. They have argued that instead of urging young women to make non-traditional choices, we should appreciate the value of, and raise the wages in, women's traditional work areas. They argue not just for equal pay for women who do the same work, but equal pay for men and women who do work that is of equal value (Gold, 1983; Treiman and Hartman, 1981).

Gender Segregations: Rethinking Connections to the Labour Market

The assumption that a better education will improve women's economic chances also need rethinking. Researchers often turn to school achievement to explain differences in occupational attainment. They assume that an important role of education is to sort students out according to their abilities and allocate them to different positions in the labour market. Good students get A's, go on to university, and get professional jobs. Poor students get low marks, leave school early, and end up in poorly paying less prestigious jobs. Or so the story goes. It suggests that if a group's achievement in school is improved their achievement in the labour market will also improve.

Education does pay off at work. Those with more education are much less likely to be unemployed, much more likely to earn high salaries and have high status jobs. In 1984, unemployment rates were 13.4% for those with less than 9 years education, 13% for those with high school education, 8.3% for those with a post-secondary certificate or diploma, and 4.6% for those with a university degree (Statistics Canada, 1986). A study of 1982 post-secondary graduates showed that their average earnings in 1984 went up with the level of their degrees. The average salary was $15,000 for trade/vocational graduates, $18,000 for college graduates, $23,000 for those with bachelor's degrees, $32,000 for those with master's degrees and $34,000 for those with doctorates. (Secretary of State, 1986). Education is correlated with an increase in women's salaries, a decrease in their unemployment rates, and an increase in their level of participation in the labour market, just as it is for men. But education does not bring about any reduction in the inequality men and women experience at work.

The most dramatic example of this comes from the fixing of salaries. While education increases women's salaries, the increase is much less for women than it is for men and the salary that each level of education buys is much lower.

Average Income by Education + Sex
Canada, 1983

	Female	Male
Grade 0 to 8	$ 7,137	$ 15,923
High School	9,960	18,686
Post-secondary certificate	13,703	24,321
University degree	20,107	33,841

Source: Statistics Canada, *Women in the Labor Force*, 1985-86 edition, p. 51.

The average woman with a university degree earns barely more than the average man with a high school diploma. Differences persist at every level of education (Devereaux and Rechnitzer, 1980).

The issue of why education pays off at work – and why it doesn't – is a contentious and surprisingly under-examined issue. Human capital theory posits that more educated workers are more valuable to the employer, and will be more productive, so they are paid more (Becker, 1964). "Screening" theorists argue that education is simply acts as a filter, where more productive people are given credentials certifying their productivity (Spence, 1973). Credentialling theory argues that those who succeed in school have cultural attributes that are preferred by employers for high status jobs (Collins, 1979). None of these models pay much attention to gender.

But sex blind models of human capital, screening and credentialling, just like status attainment regression equations, cannot capture or explain women's disadvantage in turning education into income. Since women who participate in the labour force are more highly educated than those who do not, women in the labour force have in fact slightly more education than men in the labour force. So education make s gender differences at work harder, not easier, to explain.

An important factor that needs to be taken into account is the segmented nature of labour markets. There is no single labour market where every job applicant is evaluated against every other job applicant on their merits. Instead, labour markets are "segmented" (Edwards, Reich and Gordon, 1975). The labour markets in which women predominate are different from the labour markests in which men predominate. An emphasis on the gender segmentation in labour markets reframes the questions about education and the economy. It leads to research on how women are channelled into specifically female areas, where the rewards that are available for achievement are lower than they are in male areas.

Women's jobs are closely tied to their education, but these jobs are different from men's jobs, and have different kinds of educational requirements. Women's work is characterized by the requirement for extensive educational training prior to job entry. Teachers, librarians, clerical workers, nurses train at their own expense, and are qualified by their specialized credentials. Their jobs offer few opportunities for promotion; they have a 'flat' career structure. More frequently, men move into jobs where general credentials provide for entry, while on-the-job training and promotion provide for upward mobility. (Wolf and Rosenfeld, 1978; Madden, 1973). To understand the historical roots of gender segregated workplaces, their persistence, and their characteristics, we need to look at the way employers make hiring decisions, at the impact of unions and their defense of apprenticeships, at the organization of job categories and assumptions about women's commitment to the labour force. This opens up a variety of new questions about the organization of education in relation to work, questions which could easily be ignored when only men's experience was considered.

Looking at gender segregation entails looking at the way schooling is organized, particularly in relation to the labour market. It calls our attention to dimensions of schooling that have been relatively ignored in the literature on education. Why does vocational preparation take the form it does? Why is gender differentiation built into the structure of the curriculum in the public schools? How can the structure of the curriculum and the organization of the school be changed so that is is more "girl-friendly" (Whyte et al., 1985).

The 1970 Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women looked at gender segmentation. It began with statistics on women's enrollment patterns in high school courses. In 1969, one-quarter of all high school girls were enrolled in commercial courses compared to only 5% of boys. Seventy percent of girls but only 65% of boys were in academic courses, while 7% of girls were in "other" courses (mainly industrial) compared to 30% of boys.

Today, differential patterns of enrollment persist. They are easiest to see at the community college and the university levels, where statistics are collected on program enrollments. Women predominate in engineering, science and law. They continue to enroll in programs of study that are different from and less prestigious than men's programs. In the high school, numbers are harder to come by, but there is no evidence that the gender segregation the Royal Commission pointed to has decreased (Gaskell, 1985).

These differential enrollment patterns tie women closely to a gender segregated labour market. Women are clustered in non-professional clerical, sales and service occupations. In 1984, women had 32% of managerial jobs, 79% of clerical jobs, 56% of service jobs and 43% of sales jobs (Statistics Canada, 1985-6). If occupational categories are broken down further, the differences are even clearer. Women are 75% of elementary school teachers, 88% of nurses and related workers, 9% of secretaries, but 8% of sales supervisors, 5% of dentists and 12% of insurance salespeople (Boyd, 1982). Women do jobs that are different from and lower paying than most men do.

All of the articles in this section define equal opportunity in ways that go beyond formal access. They assume that equal opportunity implies wide ranging social and educational changes, but they concentrate on different aspects of the problem.

Collis looks at computer education, an area that has expanded dramatically during the decade, but with little attention to gender issues. She sets out the reason why she is concerned about girls' lack of participation in computer oriented courses, and explores a variety of potential interventions that would increase it. She clearly puts the onus for providing equal opportunity on the school.

Kimball, Mura and Cloutier examine differences in attitudes between boys and girls in a Quebec high school, and between those who are planning to take science at CEGEP, and those who are not. Like Collis, they are concerned to move more women into mathematics and science where the rewards are greater than they are in traditionally female fields. They argue that increasing the participation of women in science will involve changes in the structure and the organization of science, as well as an increase in women's confidence.

Gaskell explores the reasons why high school girls continue to "choose" traditionally female courses in business education. These are the traditionally female and undervalued courses in the high school. She points to the links between high school course enrollments and the organization of the labour market and the family. She argues that exhorting young women to make different career choices will have little effect without a change in the way they experience work, school and family life.

Guppy, Villutini and Balson look at the changing patterns of women's participation in higher education, pointing to the gains women have made, as well as the difficulties they still confront. The authors also note that theories that do not take gender into account cannot explain changes in university enrollments over the past 20 years. They point out that explanations of enrolment changes must be based in an awareness of gender differences, and that these gender differences are substantial ones.

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4

Adolescent Females and Computers: Real and Perceived Barriers

Betty Collis

Many Canadian educators believe that schools have a responsibility to prepare students for the very near future in which technology, work, and learning will be inextricably intertwined (Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1982). Computers in particular have become commonplace in schools throughout Canada and the United States (Becker, 1986; British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1985), and there is a general expectation that some sort of competency with computers is a valuable and even necessary component of the contemporary school experience (Romaniuk, 1986). However, ever since microcomputer use first began to become popular in schools during the early 1980s, more males than females have been involved with their study and use (Phi Delta Kappa, 1983) and furthermore, there are both quantitative and qualitative differences in male and female students' access to computer opportunities (Schubert, 1986). This paper documents these differences and then presents a conceptual model that describes some of the barriers, both external and self-generated, that underlie the situation. The paper concludes with a discussion of intervention strategies whose aims are to reduce the incidence and influence of barriers that currently impede adolescent females' involvement with computers and technology.

Gender Differences in Access to Computers

School Participation

Computer use in schools is strongly established throughout Canada, with virtually all secondary schools and the majority of elementary schools having installed computers by 1985 (B.C. Ministry of Education, 1985). Extensive school-computer initiatives have been made in Ontario (Smith, 1986), Manitoba (Gonzalez, 1986), and Alberta (Romaniuk, 1986). As of March 1987, Alberta had the fifth lowest student-computer ratio of any province in Canada or state in the U.S. and the second greatest number of computers in schools, exceeded only by California (Yocam, 1987). However, despite the number of computers in schools, there is consistent evidence that females make less use of the technology than do males. This is particularly so with regard to participation in computer science courses at the secondary level (Becker, 1987; Lockheed, 1985; Smith, 1985). National assessments in the United States compared male and female enrollment in secondary school computer programming courses in 1978 and 1981-82. These assessments found approximately twice as many males as females enrolled in these courses in 1978, a difference that remained constant during the 4-year time period through 1982 (Anderson, Welch, & Harris, 1984). Although "computer programming" has come to be replaced by "computer science" as a senior secondary elective course, the same disproportionate enrollments of males and females continue to be documented (Anderson, Klassen, Krohn, & Smith-Cunnien, 1982; Lipkin & McCormick, 1985; Newsnotes, 1985a). If completion of secondary school computer science courses increases the likelihood of continued work with computers after secondary school, either in university, other postsecondary training, or the workplace, then the long-range implications of male-dominated computer science courses in secondary school may be substantial.

These gender differences in participation are also seen at the junior secondary level, although the ability to make choices about participation is limited at these grades (Hess & Miura, 1985; Revelle, Honey, Amsel, Schauble, & Levine, 1984). Male to female ratios in these studies typically range from 5:1 to 2:1. Finally, in elementary grades, several studies also report significant gender differences in "computer class participation" (Fetler, 1985; Sanders, 1984). Teachers at all grade levels identify boys, rather than girls, as the students most actively involved with school computer use (Becker, 1987). For example, when teachers in a national U.S. survey were asked to indicate the sex of the three students most involved with computers in their schools, 74 percent of the elementary teachers and 78 percent of the secondary teachers cited a male as the first student named and overall indicated males twice as often as females.

Extracurricular Usage

Gender differences in extracurricular computer use are also well established (Lockheed, 1985). McKelvey (1984) notes in a study done in several Ontario schools that ten times as many males as females used computers during extracurricular time. Becker (1987) notes that boys outnumber girls 3 to 1 where computers are used either before or after school, and, at the "typical middle school" in a 1985 national survey of 2,331 U.S. schools, only 15 percent of the extracurricular users of computers are females. Males consistently outnumber females in enrollment at computer camps and at computer-related courses outside of school and, as costs and age increase, the proportion of females decreases (Miura & Hess, 1983). Although video game arcades have declined in popularity, they were and continue to be strongly identified with male users (Kiesler, Sproull, & Eccles, 1983). Finally, home use of computers is reported to be more likely for adolescent males than for adolescent females (Collis, 1984/86; Revelle et al., 1984).

Attitudes

Gender differences in adolescents' attitudes toward computers have been reported in a number of studies, with adolescent males consistently more positive than adolescent females (Collis, 1984/86; Lockheed, 1985; Temple, 1986; Wilder, Mackie, & Cooper, 1985). Collis interviewed 156 Grade 8 and Grade 12 students to develop an item pool of statements relating to attitudes toward computers and computer users. The instrument developed from this item pool was subsequently administered to nearly 3,000 Grade 8 and Grade 12 students, the majority of the populations for those grades in two British Columbia school districts. Results from this study and subsequent replications of the study include the following:

1. Sex differences in attitudes toward computers are strongly established by Grade 8.
2. Males are consistently more positive about using computers than are females, and more likely to express interest in and pleasure in using a computer.
3. Males and females agree that males are most likely to be the computer users in their households, and that "mother" is the least likely person in their households to have any interest in using a computer.
4. Females are more likely than males to associate social and academic stereotypes with computer users. (Collis, 1985c)

Why be Concerned About These Differences in Attitude and Participation?

It is not important or feasible that all adolescents have positive attitudes toward technology or participate in computer science courses in secondary school. If females were underrepresented in computer classes and in informal experiences with computers because of disinterest based on thoughtful decision-making processes on their parts, the situation might not be of serious concern to educators, especially now that early predictions of school computer literacy experiences being critical to future job prospects have been qualified (Levin & Rumberger, 1986). However, a number of research studies indicate that inequities and barriers to access, not thoughtful, well-informed decisions are involved. Females stay away from computers because their options become prematurely limited, either by themselves or by others.

> They believe that working with these machines is appropriate for bright males, but not for them, that they indeed are "not cut out for computers," and that efforts they might make would be repaid with both social embarrassment and personal frustration.... Females expect they won't do well, won't enjoy the (computer) contact, and have no need for it. (Collis, 1985b, pp. 180-81)

As personal expectations frequently become self-fulfilling, it is critical that educators respond to any influences that may relate to the stunting of academic achievement and self-esteem (Sadker, 1975). What are the influences that serve to erect or reinforce barriers between many adolescent females and constructive computer experiences in schools?

A Conceptual Model to Predict Adolescent Females' Computer Access

Models to Predict Participation

A number of models have been developed to predict females' participation and achievement in various school subjects (Armstrong & Price, 1982; Fennema, 1980; Marsh, Smith, & Barnes, 1985). All include perceptions of self-efficacy and personal relevance as well as perceived expectations of significant others as predicators. Some researchers have attempted to build a prediction model of influences on females' utilization of school computer resources (Dasho & Beckum, 1983; Lockheed, Thorpe, Brooks-Gunn, Casserly, & McAloon, 1985; Sanders, 1984; Schubert, 1986).

Dasho and Beckum (1983) identify five "problem areas" that influence secondary school students' computer access: (1) attitude-related, including motivational and self-concept variables; (2) software-related; (3) hardware access and "human interface" problems; (4) academic, including interest in and success in certain computer-related courses; and (5) social, perceptions of peers and of home environments. Schubert (1986) lists (1) school policy, (2) software selection, (3) student encouragement, and (4) the role of family and peers as critical components. Lockheed and her colleagues (1985) have developed a complicated causal model which includes the interactions between task characteristics; cultural milieu; teacher, student, and family characteristics; and various domains of expectations (p. 24).

Based on analyses such as these, we propose a model with three dimensions as an efficient predictor of adolescents' access to constructive experiences with computers. The model has potential predictive and explanatory value and can also serve as a framework for intervention strategies. A study involving researchers from British Columbia, Alberta, and Quebec is being conducted (1986-87) to test the model with data from adolescents in rural, isolated, and urban areas in various geographic regions of Canada. As of March 1987, over 3,000 Grade 11 students from eight urban areas in Canada have been involved in the study. The three dimensions of the predictive model may be described as: (1) school policies and practices, (2) social expectations, and (3) personal factors. The dimensions, while distinct, are not independent.

1. School-Related Policies and Practices

(a) *Policies relating to academic pre- and corequisites.*

The majority of utilization of secondary school computer resources occurs within the context of computer science or computer studies courses (Becker, 1983, 1986). These courses frequently require mathematics prerequisites, have a mathematical orientation, and are taught by instructors who were originally mathematics teachers at the school (Lockheed & Frakt, 1984; Sanders, 1984). Little opportunity exists to use school computers outside of this mathematically oriented computer science framework, although business education students may have their own lab (Becker, 1983). More recent U.S. data show only 13 percent of secondary school computer use occurs outside computer science courses or business education courses (Becker, 1987). Data from a British Columbia survey show the same pattern of limited opportunities for computer use in secondary schools (Flodin, 1984), with students' choices typically limited to computer science (with senior mathematics pre- or corequisites) or word processing in business education courses.

Becker's surveys also document a revealing statistic. As secondary schools acquire more computer equipment, the new resources are typically not used to expand access to more students but instead to provide more extensive access to those already involved in computer science courses. In terms of inequities and barriers, this represents a systematic exclusivity that focuses computer opportunities on capable mathematics students. This in turn serves to disfranchise the majority of students for whom mathematics is neither a strong subject nor an interest, and this group includes proportionately more females than males (Fennema, 1980). Thus, the typical secondary school practice of allowing computer science teachers and courses to dominate use of school computers and to insist on mathematics prerequisites for access to these courses is a real and effective barrier to computer use for many females.

(b) *Practices relating to a limited view of computer use.*

Computer science and studies courses involve a narrow view of computer applications relative to the many valuable uses that can be made of computers in the secondary school setting. Computers can be used in English classes to support composition and as tools for functional writing done in a social context (Daiute, 1985). They can be used in science classes as data-capturing and display tools and as vehicles for the presentation of various types of simulations of scientific processes (Gredler, 1986; Lam, 1984-85). They can be also used in social studies as tools for the accessing and organizing of information and the display of information in graphic form (Parker, 1986) and in art and music courses for the support of new types of creative expression (Lamb, 1982). These and many other applications are available now for the secondary school. They do not require any substantial infusion of new equipment or reorganization of instructional timetables. Their incorporation has the potential of providing interesting and relevant computer experiences for a much larger group of students than those who are now interested in computer science courses (Sanders, 1985). In particular, word processing in an academic context rather than in the vocational context of business education courses has special potential for female students, in that females are frequently more self-confident about themselves as writers and communicators in English courses than they are of themselves as participants in mathematics, science, and computer courses (Collis & Ollila, 1986a; Lockheed & Frakt, 1984). However, the typical secondary English, science, social studies, or mathematics teacher makes no use at all of school computer resources (Becker, 1986; Lehman, 1985; Newsnotes, 1985b). Thus, by school practice, probably based on a lack of awareness of the breadth of instructional uses of computers possible in all subject areas, the majority of adolescent females are never given any opportunity to use school computers in instructional settings where they could develop their awareness of the computer as a relevant tool, especially for language-related tasks. Through this omission, adolescent females as well as males are deprived of access to many valuable aspects of constructive computer usage.

(c) *School policies with regard to the location of computers.*

The most typical pattern for hardware organization in secondary schools is to cluster the majority of the school machines in a single computer laboratory (Becker, 1983, 1986). This may inadvertently result in the creation of more barriers for female students. The secondary school computer lab has become associated with males (Collis, 1985a; Lockheed & Frakt, 1984). Computer labs frequently become locker-room-type environments that are unattractive to most females (and to many male students as well) (Lockheed & Frakt, 1984; Smith, 1985). In addition, computer labs often become the responsibility of the computer science teacher whose students absorb as much access time as they are allowed (Becker, 1986). Together, the computer teachers and students may be perceived as an elite group around whom others are not comfortable (Matson, 1985). Schools could mitigate many of the problems associated with computer laboratories by rotating access to the lab and responsibility for the lab among teachers in different disciplines or by limiting the lab access of computer science students to certain time blocks. However, these strategies rarely occur. School policy, or lack of policy, with regard to location of and access to hardware perpetuates a major barrier to equitable and relevant computer usage for females.

(d) *School practices with regard to the organization of learning.*

A final area in which school practices fail to relate to the interests and preferences of many female students involves the type of learning environments usually organized for computer use and computer-related assignments. Computer-related assignments frequently involve programming or program design done independently by each student as individual keyboarding practice in business education word-processing courses. However, there is evidence that many female students prefer cooperative learning situations to individual or competitive situations (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1986; Peterson &

Fennema, 1985). Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne assigned Grade 8 social studies students to three groups, all of which made use of a computer simulation within the context of a two-week unit on map reading and navigation. One group was told to work cooperatively, with their final grades based on an average of each group member's marks. Another group was told they would be graded on a competitive, norm-referenced basis within their group. The third group was told their grades would reflect only their individual work and would be based on criterion-referenced standards rather than through any sort of comparison with their classmates. Males in the competitive condition expressed a more positive attitude toward computers after the treatments were concluded than did any of the other male or female groups. However, females in the cooperative condition accomplished more work and achieved higher scores than did females in the competitive and individualistic conditions, and students in the cooperative condition (male and female) completed more work and correctly answered more items than did students in the other two groups. In addition, students in the cooperative condition nominated more female classmates as desired future work partners than did students working competitively or individually. Students in the individualistic condition ended the experience "liking computers" less than any of the other students. These results suggest that cooperative learning experiences involving computers have both social and achievement-oriented benefits for adolescents and may "equalize status and respect" for female group members (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1986, p. 390). Thus, the typical secondary school practice of expecting students to work individually at computer terminals does not exploit a learning environment that is attractive and productive for many female students.

2. Social Expectations

(a) *Computers and masculine associations.*

It is well established that gender-typed labeling of school subjects is related to students' achievement and participation in those subjects (Dwyer, 1973). Furthermore, expectancy of success in a task is also related to an individual's perception of its gender-appropriateness for him- or herself (Stein, Pohly, & Mueller, 1971). Because of this, it is particularly significant that the computer domain is strongly identified as being a masculine one. Collis and Ollila (1986b) found that 3- to 6-year-old children already associate computers with boys rather than with girls. Wilder, Macker, and Cooper (1985) and Swoope and Johnson (1985) also found that young children perceive computers as more appropriate for boys than for girls and that this impression increases with age.

The computer-male association is reinforced by the marketplace. Sanders (1985) examined large-circulation computer magazines and found males to dominate the articles and illustrations. Ware and Stuck (1984) did a similar analysis with similar results. Men appeared twice as often as women and were overrepresented as managers and experts, whereas women were overrepresented as clerical workers or observers. It is not surprising that magazines display this type of gender difference with regard to computer use in the workplace. Men are more likely than women to be involved in computer use at a managerial or expert level, while females who use computers at work are more likely to be using them under someone's direction and for clerical tasks (Bodger, 1985; Stanton, 1983). In the home, males are the predominant computer users (Collis, 1984/86; Sanders, 1985) and the Director of Educational Marketing for Apple Computers was quoted in 1985 as saying, "The buyers of Apple computers are 98% male. We do not feel that women represent any great untapped audience" (Sanders, 1985, p. 23).

Secondary students have absorbed this message of computers being in a male domain (Collis, 1985a; Hawkins, 1985). Collis found female students to be significantly more likely than males to endorse a stereotype of a computer user as being a bright male who likes mathematics but is not particularly attractive socially. Lockheed and Frakt (1984) are among many others who document a male association attached to computer use for secondary school students. This gender typing is likely to erect or maintain a barrier that will inhibit the development of computer-related competencies in many adolescent females.

3. Personal Factors

(a) *Lower self-confidence.*

It has long been documented that females express lower levels of self-confidence than do their male peers. Cross noted in 1968 that women are less likely than men to believe they have the ability to do university work even though they earn better secondary school grades. A survey of graduate students in science, engineering, and medicine at Standard University ("High Test Scores," 1984) showed that even the women in this group were "less self-confident and assertive than their male counterparts." Marsh, Smith, and Barnes (1985) found females to have significantly lower self-concepts in mathematics than did their male peers, even though the females had significantly higher achievement levels in mathematics than the males.

With this inclination to express lower levels of self-confidence, it is not surprising that females have been found to be significantly less self-confident than their male classmates with respect to computer use (Collis, 1985c). Heightened anxiety level can create another barrier to adolescent females' constructive involvement with computers.

(b) *"We can, but I can't"*

There is an interesting extension that can be made to the examination of females' self-confidence with regard to computer use. The only computer-attitude items on Collis' survey (1984/86) to which females responded in a more positive manner than did males were those which described the ability of "women in general" to be competent computer users. Females in both Grade 8 and Grade 12 strongly agreed with all statements about females in the abstract being as computer-competent as men (while males were inclined to disagree). However, as soon as the females were asked to assess their own competencies and self-confidence with regard to computers, they shifted in their attitudes. The typical adolescent female respondent felt that women in general are capable, but that she as an individual is not likely to be a competent computer user. This "We can, but I can't" paradox may represent the collision of two different sets of cultural messages and may have psychosocial implications for contemporary adolescent females that range well beyond computer work (Collis, 1985c).

A similar finding has recently appeared in a Labour Canada survey of the career aspirations of Canadian school children survey of the career aspirations of Canadian school children (Ellis and Sayer, 1986). Ellis and Sayer found a definite trend among the Grade 1 to 8 students they surveyed. The students saw the development of a greater participation rate of women in traditionally male careers developing (interestingly, there was no similar trend for men toward traditional "women's work"). However, when girls were asked to indicate their own career aspirations, they tended to choose "women's jobs" rather than predominately masculine professions.

> It was as though girls did not apply to themselves their general belief in the equality of the sexes. Many of them seemed to be saying, "Yes, women can become doctors, but I expect to be a nurse." (p. 55)

This "We can, but I can't" paradox has the potential to be a formidable barrier to equitable computer access for adolescent females, no less powerful because it is self-imposed.

(c) *Perceived irrelevance of computer work.*

Computer activities in schools may hold little appeal to females because the females do not see any personal relevance for computers in their own lives, present or future (Lockheed & Frakt, 1984). One major reason for this may be that adolescent females still are less career-motivated than males (Tobin & Fox, 1980) forming career goals at a later age than males (Cooper & Robinson, 1985) and, as a result, they may be less concerned about the importance of developing a strong base for further professional or vocational growth. Ellis and Sayer note that girls, at least in their Canadian sample, still "picture their adulthood as consisting of being mothers with small children" (1986, p. 56) and further assume they will have husbands to support them.

> Even Grade 8 girls of 14 years of age did not consider the possibility of their having to be in remunerative employment to support themselves or their children. There do not seem to be any unmarried mothers, deserted wives, widows, or divorcees among the imaginary women Canadian schoolgirls

expect to become. (Ellis & Sayer, 1986, p. 56).

This "Cinderella" perspective (Dowling, 1981) has the potential to translate itself into a major barrier, a barrier of disinterest that can thwart motivated effort with computers in schools for adolescent females – "If it's for boys, anyway, and isn't very interesting, and I'm never going to need it, why bother?" Until girls realize that they will in all probability have to be breadwinners, not just "cakewinners," it is likely that more males than females will continue to involve themselves in computer opportunities in secondary school.

Recommendations

Intervention Strategies

As of 1986, there are at least seven large-scale intervention programs focusing on the reduction of barriers to females' utilization of school computers (Schubert, 1986). All of these programs are based in the U.S. Most involve materials for parents and teachers as well as descriptions of computer activities that are felt to be attractive to both boys and girls. However, similar intervention programs for females in mathematics and science have long been in existence (Ekstrom, 1979) but have apparently not made large-scale impacts on female interest and participation in these subjects. It is difficult to expect isolated intervention programs to have any sustained impact on the formidable assortment of barriers between secondary school females and equitable, constructive use of school technology. However, some recommendations do seem important.

1. Expand computer use in secondary schools beyond the computer science/computer studies courses so that *every* student has repeated opportunities to use computers as appropriate tools within the context of his or her ongoing school activities. Emphasize language and communication applications in order to capitalize on the positive attitudes females have about themselves and language (Collis & Ollila, 1986a). Build this orientation into teacher-training programs and teacher inservice so that teachers see the computer as a tool within a curriculum context rather than as an object of study in itself (Salomon, 1987).
2. Monitor the computer laboratory environments in schools so that all students have equitable access to the resources even if this means that some computer science students will have less access than they currently do. "Let the herd instinct work for you" (Sanders, 1985) by structuring cooperative computer activities for pairs or groups of students.
3. Counsel adolescent females to more realistic expectations of the importance that work is likely to have for them in their adult lives. Articulate and discuss the "We can, but I can't" paradox and the "Cinderella" expectation

and help the students identify the impact of these psychological constructs on their current and future academic decisions.

This last point is especially important. We as educators must share some of the responsibility for the barriers of perceived inadequacy that thwart female students. We have let male mathematics teachers become the computer educators in our secondary schools. We have allowed the content of school computer experiences to be weighted with mathematics and have minimized or ignored the central importance of language and communication in professional computer use in the workplace. We have allowed a few male students to dominate the school computers. More fundamentally, we have allowed females to grow up feeling they are inadequate. We have not reacted when we see them limit their options by erecting barriers marked "appropriate behaviour – for a girl" and "not appropriate – for a girl." We have not communicated to them the importance of work, with or without a technological component, to their future financial and psychological health, nor have we communicated the extent to which the level of this health will relate to their ability to feel self-confident and productive in a technologically dominated society.

Removing some of the barriers to appropriate technological interaction will be a major challenge for both educators and students. Not removing them may lead to results too serious to ignore.

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5

Girls and Science Programs: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

Roberta Mura, Meredith Kimball and *Renee Cloutier*

Introduction

Women participate in math and science careers at a much lower rate than men. In 1982-1983 women constituted 16% of university professors, but only 5% of the faculty in the sciences (including physical sciences and mathematics) and 1.5% in applied sciences, e.g., engineering, forestry (Statistics Canada, 1984a). In the same years, women represented 51% of all bachelor degrees, 40% of all masters degrees, and 25% of all doctorates. In the math and science fields the comparable figures were 28%, 20%, and 11%. In applied sciences the figures were even lower at 9%, 9%, and 5% (Statistics Canada, 1984b).

In an attempt to explain these discrepancies, some researchers have examined differences in mathematics achievement and enrollment in high school mathematics courses. Mathematics is an important focus of research because it is required for all university science programs. High school math courses serve as a "filter" in that students who do not take these courses find it much more difficult, if not impossible, to enter science and applied science programs in university (Sells, 1980). Accordingly, some researchers who have been concerned with explaining and increasing the low participation rates of women in scientific professions have examined sex-related differences in mathematics achievement and enrollment in high school mathematics courses.

Until the age of about 14, few sex-related differences in mathematics achievement are found. When differences are found, girls sometimes outperform boys, especially in tests of calculation skills (Bidwell, 1983) and boys sometimes outperform girls on tests of problem solving, applications of mathematics, and math reasoning (Armstrong, 1981; Fennema & Carpenter, 1981; Marshall, 1984). In high school and beyond, however, the pattern changes; where differences do occur males tend to score higher than females on some mathematics achievement tests (Fennema, 1985; Meece, Parsons, Kaczala, Goff, & Futterman, 1982). Males do not perform better in all situations or on all tests. In particular, males tend to do better on non-school based tests such as standardized achievement tests which measure learning outside as well as inside the classroom (Benbow & Stanley, 1980). On tests that measure mathematical skills learned only in school (e.g., geometry proof writing) no sex-related differences are found (Senk & Usiskin, 1983). Furthermore, studies of math grades as opposed to math aptitude tests show that females perform as well as or often higher than their male peers (Benbow & Stanley, 1982a; Casserly, 1980; deWolf, 1981; Pallas & Alexander, 1983; Parsons, Adler & Kaczala, 1982; Peterson, Burton, & Baker, 1984). It would seem that the statement often made by educators and accepted by the general public that girls have less math ability is based on standardized tests that tap both classroom and out-of-school learning. Sex-related differences are not found, or girls perform better if classroom learning is tested.

In studies of mathematics course enrollment researchers have consistently found that fewer young women enroll in elective high school math courses than young men. This has been found in both the United States (Brush, 1980; Ernest, 1976; Sells, 1980; Sherman & Fennema, 1977) and Canada (Mura, 1982; Wiggins, 1982).

Given that males take more courses and often perform better on non-school-based or standardized mathematics achievement tests, a logical and important question is whether the studies of math achievement on standardized tests take into account the number of high school math courses females and males have taken (Sherman, 1978). This is an important question because students who have taken more math courses will be more familiar with the problems on a mathematics achievement test and perhaps also less anxious or nervous about taking the test. Thus, when women receive lower scores on standardized mathematics achievement tests it may be primarily a result of the fact that they have taken fewer courses. Most studies do not match females and males on number of courses taken. However, the ones that do usually find that sex-related differences in mathematics achievement become smaller or disappear on some or all of the standardized tests that are used (Armstrong, 1981; deWolf, 1981; Fennema & Sherman, 1977; Pallas & Alexander, 1983; Wise, 1985). These findings are similar to those discussed above, which show that women perform as well as men on measures of classroom learning. Both sets of findings indicate that women perform as well as men in mathematics if they have similar backgrounds. Therefore, the above findings indicate that sex-related achievement differences in math do not account for the lower enrollment of women in high school mathematics courses, nor for women's lower participation in mathematics and science careers.

Why do women take fewer math courses than men if they do as well or better in the courses they do take? Although educators, researchers and the general public have often assumed that math course choice is determined by ability, we can see from the above discussion that ability differences do not account for these differences in enrollment. Clearly, course choice is determined by more than achievement levels. In an attempt to examine factors other than achievement, Meece and her colleagues (Meece, et al., 1982) proposed a model in which two major factors determine course choice and performance. The first major factor is the person's perception of the value of the task, in this case math. The second major factor is expectancy of success. There are four attitudes that contribute to task value. The first attitude is called the *intrinsic* value, i.e., how much one likes or dislikes doing math. The second is the *utility* value, or how useful math is perceived to be either now or in the future. The third is *cost* value, or the balance between the perceived costs and benefits of taking math courses. The fourth is *attainment* value, or the importance of doing well in math.

Expectancy of success includes attitudes concerning how well one expects to do in current as well as future math courses. Thus, it is argued that a person will choose to engage in achievement tasks that she/he expects to do well in and that are seen to be useful, interesting, important and do not involve the sacrifice of more important activities. Meece and her colleagues place their two major factors of task value and expectancy of success within a more complex model. They argue that several other phenomena that directly or indirectly influence task value and expectancy of success must be taken into account. For example, task value is related to perceptions of one's self (especially sex-role attitudes), one's own goals, and perceptions of socializers' attitudes. Expectancy of success is related to confidence in one's ability, perceptions of task difficulty and attributions for success and failure. Furthermore, these factors interact with each other. For example, if one has a low self-concept of one's math ability, this may lead to rejecting occupational goals that require math, thus lowering the task value of mathematics achievement.

The Meece et al. (1982) model is useful because it attempts to integrate a number of important variables that influence math course enrollment for both boys and girls. Because the model predicts that the many variables involved in influencing course enrollment work in similar ways for females and males, it also predicts sex-related differences in these variables. For example, if confidence predicts enrollment for both sexes but girls enroll in lower numbers than boys, then it is expected that girls will be less confident of their math ability than boys.

This study was designed to investigate a number of the variables proposed by Meece et al. (1982). Most researchers following the Meece model have examined sex-related differences in attitudes toward math and how these relate to course enrollment. We wanted to extend this analysis to look not only at how women and men differed in their attitudes but also at how young people who intended to go into a science program in the following year differed in their attitudes toward math from those who did not intend to pursue a science program. The major purpose of this study was to discover whether differences in attitudes toward math were related to sex, to choice of a science program or to both. Differences in these relational patterns would have important practical and theoretical implications. On a practical level, if sex-related differences in attitudes toward math are present among students who have already chosen a science program, then educators need to be concerned not only with how to encourage young women to choose science programs but also with women's continued vulnerability after choosing a science-related program. This vulnerability would stem from a set of attitudes (e.g., lesser confidence) that would be related in the Meece et al. (1982) model to decreased enrollment in future math courses. Thus, these sex-related differences in attitudes might make young women less likely to continue in their intended science program because of a decision not to take more advanced math courses.

On a theoretical level, science program choice may be an important outcome variable in addition to math course enrollment within the Meece et al. (1982) model, and/or an important decision that mediates enrollment in mathematics courses. In either case the choice of a science program is a decision that is of concern to educators and researchers interested in increasing women's participation in mathematics and science because it is the decision that is most directly related to the actual participation of women in these professions.

The independent variables we studied were sex and choice of science. Choice of science was defined as having applied (or not having applied) to a science program for the next year. Our dependent variables were measures of attitudes toward mathematics taken from the Meece et al. (1982) model. We examined intrinsic value (enjoyment of math), utility value (perceived usefulness of math), confidence (expectations of future math success), attributions of success and failure in math (whether one thought one's own success/failure was due to ability or effort), and sex-role attitudes (plans concerning future family and employment roles). In choosing to study sex-role attitudes we have emphasized what is for Meece et al. (1982) a relatively minor variable. In the Meece model the strongest emphasis is put on attitudes, such as confidence, that relate to enrollment choices in the same way for both sexes; the model emphasizes that both males and females with high confidence enroll in more math courses. However, sex-role attitudes and in particular a perceived conflict between one's current or future sex-role and a math or science career is an attitude that is much more likely to influence females than males. Sherman (1982) found that young women with four years of high school math were more likely to see their femininity as conflicting with their success in math than were girls with three years of math. This conflict may increase the further a woman goes in pursuing a math-related career. Adult female mathematicians are more likely than adult male mathematicians to report that their sex had influenced their career (Luchins, 1976).

Because researchers have not examined sex-related differences within groups of students who have chosen science, our research was exploratory and our hypotheses were not specified for each dependent variable. However, we did predict in general that students choosing a science program should have more positive attitudes toward math than students not choosing science, that girls would be less positive in their attitudes toward math than boys, and that there would be fewer sex-related differences among students choosing science.

Our predictions were based both on the Meece et al. (1982) model and on past research. The Meece model argues that positive attitudes toward math lead to math course enrollment. One would therefore expect that students who planned to take a science program which requires more math courses to have positive attitudes toward math. Much past research indicates that males are more positive than females in their attitudes toward math (Fennema, 1985; Meece et al., 1982; Parsons et al., 1982; Sherman, 1982, 1983; Sherman & Fennema, 1977).

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects were 89 students from three high school mathematics classes in Quebec.[1] These students were all in their last year of secondary school when they were first studied. The students were divided both by sex and by their choice of academic program. Of the 50 girls in the study, 11 intended to enroll in a science program the following year at CEGEP and 39 did not. Of the 39 boys, 18 planned to enter a science program and 21 did not. Significantly more boys than girls planned to enter a science program.[2] The three classes varied in both socioeconomic status and stream. Two classes were from the regular stream and one class was from the advanced or enriched stream. One of the regular classes was from a middle-class school and the other two classes (one regular and one enriched) were from a lower-class school.[3] The choice of a science program was lowest (13%) in the regular classroom from the lower-class school, next highest (25%) in the regular classroom from the middle-class school and highest (63%) from the enriched classroom in the lower-class school. This suggests participation in an enriched program in high school may be more important for selection of a science program than the social class of the students attending the school.

Materials and Procedures

A questionnaire was administered in the spring of the student's last year in secondary school. A number of questions were asked concerning demographic variables, attitudes toward math (including confidence, intrinsic value and utility), expectations concerning the student's final mark in math and concerning future math courses, causal attributions for success and failure in math and French, and plans for the future including academic, employment and family plans. In addition to administering the questionnaire, interviews were conducted with a subset of the students and with each of the three teachers. Twenty six of the students were interviewed. The students were chosen to represent females and males who intended to take or not take science programs and who had achieved high grades in the past and present in math courses. The semi-structured interviews, which were conducted after the first questionnaire was administered, focussed on the students' reasons for their academic and career choices. The interviews with the teachers focussed on their expectations for their students' math performance on the final exam, their perception of their students' interest in math and their estimations of their students' future math potential. Each teacher was asked to select from a list of reasons those that best explained success and failure in math for 12 of their students. These 12 students were chosen to represent equally males and females who were high, medium or low achievers in math as defined by their performance in their current math course. At the same time, over a period of three months, both informal and more formal observations of the three classrooms were carried out in order to assess ways in which the interactions between the teachers and the students may have been different for girls and boys.

Results

In analyzing our results we used an analysis of variance model to examine the relationship of sex and choice of science to attitudes toward math. For each attitude toward math we conducted an analysis of variance, using sex and choice of science as variables. Each analysis allowed us to examine separately differences in the attitude that women and men expressed and differences in the attitude that science and non-science students expressed. Three different patterns of results were found. In the first pattern, choice of science but not sex was related to some attitudes. That is, science students differed from non-science students, but women and men did not differ. In the second pattern, both sex and choice of science were related to some attitudes. In other words, men and women differed in their attitudes, and science students differed from non-science students as well. In the third pattern, sex but not choice of science was related to some attitudes. That is, women's and men's attitudes differed but the science and non-science students did not differ.

Attitudes Toward Math That Relate to Choice of Science

Intrinsic value and utility were both significantly related to choice of science, but not to sex. That is, science-oriented students rated math as more useful and better liked than did non-science students. Women and men men were similar in their views of math as useful and liked.

Intrinsic value was measured with six items that asked about the student's liking or disliking for math. Students who planned to take science programs in CEGEP reported liking math more and disliking it less than other students.[4] Males and females did not differ in their reported liking of math. Another indication of the intrinsic value of math was provided by a question which asked students to name their favorite subject. Not surprisingly, students intending to take a science program were significantly more likely to name math or one of the sciences than were non-science oriented students,[5] but girls and boys were equally likely to name science and non-science courses as their favorite courses. Although there were no sex-related differences in the questionnaire measures of intrinsic interest, in the semi-structured interviews it was noted that girls who had chosen sciences were more ambivalent than the boys. For example, the girls were more likely to say in the interview that they did not like one of the sciences, e.g., chemistry or physics, or that they did not like one branch of math (geometry in particular). These differences suggest more subtle differences between the sexes in enjoyment of math and science. When teachers were asked to estimate the degree of interest their students had in math there was no overall difference. However, one teacher rated girls as less interested in math than boys. Overall, the differences in intrinsic interest in math were related to choice of science but not to sex.

Utility value was examined with six items that asked about the usefulness of math in future daily life and work. Again, students who planned to take a science program saw math as more useful than other students,[6] but females and males did not differ on this scale. One other indication of the greater value that science students attached to the usefulness of math was their greater agreement with one item stating that knowledge of math would allow one a wider choice of programs in university.[7] Again there was no sex-related difference on this item.

Attitudes Toward Math That Relate to Choice of Science and Sex

Choice of science and sex were both related to confidence. In other words, males were more confident than females; those choosing science were more confident than those not choosing science. In order to measure confidence, there were five items on the questionnaire which asked students about how easy math was for them and about their confidence in being able to succeed at math in the future. On the scale formed by these items boys scored significantly higher than girls[8] and students who planned to take science programs were significantly more confident than students who did not.[9] Another indication of confidence was a question asking students which course they did the best in. Again girls were less likely than boys to name math and science courses[10] and students who planned to take science programs were more likely than non-science students to name math and science courses.[11] One other possible indication of boys' greater confidence was that during the informal classroom observations, boys (who represented 44% of the students) responded to 75% of the teacher's questions, which were addressed to the class at large. In one measure of confidence, estimation of final exam mark in math for the year's work, there were no differences related to sex or choice of science. However, when asked about future potential to succeed in math, girls rated themselves lower than boys did,[12] and students intending to pursue non-science programs rated themselves as lower than science-oriented students did.[13] In a parallel set of questions teachers were questioned about their expectations for their students. They were significantly more likely to overestimate the girls' performance on the final exam and to underestimate the boys' performance.[14] However, when asked to rate the students' potential for success in future math courses, the same teachers rating the same students saw the girls as having less potential than boys.[15]

Attitudes Toward Math That Relate to Sex

Two variables yielded sex-related differences, but not relationship to choice of science. The first was in attributions for success in math. Students were asked on the questionnaire to choose one reason that best explained why they received a good mark in math, a good mark in French, a bad mark in math, and a bad mark in French. The reasons provided included ability (or lack of ability), effort (or lack of effort), good luck (or bad), ease of test (or difficulty), help received (or not received), or having a good day (or bad). Of the six attributions a large majority of students chose either ability or effort as reasons for their success (78%) or failure (78%) in math. There were significant sex-related differences, with girls being more likely to attribute their success in math to effort and less likely to attribute it to ability than boys.[16] There were no differences related to choice of science in the tendency to attribute success in math to ability or effort. For failure in math, the students overwhelmingly chose lack of effort to explain their poor performance (75%). Only 3 students (3.4%) chose lack of ability and they were all girls in non-science programs. There were no differences related to sex or choice of science in students' explanations of success or failure in French. The most common reason given for either success (69%) or failure (71%) in French was effort. For a subsample of students, teachers were asked to give attributions for their students' success and failure in math. Although the numbers were too small to conduct significance tests, the teachers also tended to attribute girls' success less to ability and more to effort than the boys' success. Reasons given by teachers for their students' failures in math were distributed evenly over all six categories.

The second important sex-related difference concerned students' expectations of their own and their future spouses' employment when they will have young children at home. Students were asked to indicate whether they planned to work full-time, part-time, or not at all when their children are young. Twenty three percent of the girls and 74% of the boys expected to work full-time as opposed to part-time or not at all in this situation,[17] while 88% of the girls and 9% of the boys expected their spouse to work full-time as opposed to part-time or not at all.[18] While it was not possible because of small numbers to test for significance, the pattern of results was similar for students planning science or non-science programs. For example, 28% of the science females, 21% of the non-science females, 69% of the science males, and 79% of the non-science males expected to work full-time. On the other hand, 71% of the science females, 91% of the non-science females, 7% of the science males, and 11% of the non-science males expected their spouse to work full-time.

Discussion

Our results confirm two of our three general hypotheses. First, students choosing a science program had more positive attitudes toward math than students not choosing science. This was true for perceptions of liking math, usefulness of math and confidence in one's own ability at math. Second, there were also sex-related differences. Specifically, the young women expressed less self confidence, attributed their success in math more to effort, and were less likely to expect to work full-time while their children were young than the young men in our study. The third general hypothesis was that there would be fewer sex-related differences among students choosing science than among those not choosing science. This was not supported. We either found sex-related differences in both science and non-science students (confidence, success attributions, and future work plans) or found a lack of sex-related differences for both science and non-science students (utility and intrinsic interest).

In examining our specific results, we found a difference in the pattern of results for attitudes that Meece et al. (1982) relate to task value from those they relate to expectancy. The two scales, intrinsic interest and utility, that make up task value were related to choice of science but not to sex. That is, students choosing science saw math as more useful and interesting than students who had not chosen science programs, but women and men did not differ in how they rated the usefulness and intrinsic interest of math.

The lack of a sex-related difference in intrinsic interest in math from this sample is not surprising when compared with other studies. Most studies find no sex-related differences in measures of intrinsic interest, and in those that do, women sometimes rate math as more enjoyable (Sherman & Fennema, 1977) and sometimes men do (Benbow & Stanley, 1982b). However, as we noted in the discussion of the results, the interview data do show more ambivalence on the part of the girls toward math and science, at least to the extent of expressing a dislike of certain sub-areas of math or science. Perhaps if more subtle or sensitive measures were used, differences would be shown between girls and boys in intrinsic interest. However, it is very clear that, given straightforward questions concerning intrinsic interest and utility, choice of science is related to students' perceptions but not to their sex.

Our results found no differences between women and men in utility or the perceived usefulness of math. This finding differs from most other studies which report that women see math as less useful than men (Eccles [Parsons], Adler, & Meece, 1984; Meece et al., 1982; Sherman & Fennema, 1977). In our sample many of the young women who had not applied to a science program planned to enter business programs in CEGEP and this choice may have led them to rate math as more useful to their future than young women in other studies.

When we turn to factors that in the Meece et al. (1982) model relate to expectancy, attributions for success and confidence, a very different picture emerges. Both sex and choice of science were related to the students' confidence while attributions for success in math were related only to sex. Even when girls chose a science program they were less likely to attribute their success to ability, and more likely to attribute it to effort than the boys who chose science. This difference is an important one because math is a domain that is often perceived by students, teachers and parents to be dependent on ability to a greater extent than other academic areas (Eccles [Parsons], Adler, & Meece, 1984). Furthermore, math is also perceived to become more difficult with each passing year. The effort one expends this year may ensure success but may not be adequate next year. Ability on the other hand is perceived to be an expandable quality that will meet the need this year and in the future. If one holds these perceptions, attributing one's success to effort is not as secure a foundation for future success in math as attributing it to ability. And indeed we can see from the results of this study that females were as confident as males of their ability to succeed in ongoing math courses (as measured by their estimation of their final marks) but were less confident than males about their potential for success in future math courses. Furthermore, their teachers agreed with them. While the teachers actually overestimated the girls' performance more than the boys' on the final exam they also saw their female students as having less potential to succeed in future math courses. These contradictions may well be related to the differential attributions of success made both by the students and by the teachers for their students. If a girl's success is based on effort, then you can count on her doing well in the current situation where she is working hard. However, for future unknown courses, it is the boy's ability attributions that create more confidence both in himself and in the teachers' perceptions of him.

Girls planning to take a science program were also less confident than science-oriented boys. They scored lower on our questionnaire measure, were less likely to name math and science courses as those they did best in, were less likely to answer questions directed to the class at large, and had a lower judgment of their future potential to succeed at math courses. Only in their estimations of their performance in their current math course were they similar to boys. This finding of sex-related differences in future but not present performance expectations has also been reported by others for both high school (Meece et al., 1982; Parsons, Meece, Adler, & Kaczala, 1982) and university students (Mura, 1987).

The pattern of results has important implications for educators. In the introduction we indicated that different interventions would be important depending on whether we found differences related to choice of science, sex, or both. Our results show that factors related to the value of math such as intrinsic interest and utility are related to choice of science while expectancy of future success, as reflected in success ability attributions and confidence, is related either to sex or to both sex and choice of science. This implies the need to counsel young women into sciences and also to support them once they get there. Our data suggest that both male and female students who have chosen a science program view math as useful and interesting. However, even after young women have chosen a science program they are more vulnerable than boys. This vulnerability does not, as we saw in the introduction, lie in their lack of ability, but rather in their own perceptions of their ability. The young women in our study were less confident of their ability to succeed in future math courses and saw their success as due to effort more than to ability. We found that teachers saw their female students as having less potential and as succeeding more because of effort. Furthermore, parents too assume that their daughters have to work harder to succeed at math (Parsons, Adler et al., 1982). Apparently, everywhere the girl turns, she will be faced with the idea that if she does well it is because of effort and that she may not be able to do as well in the future. This may be related to the popularly held, but inaccurate belief that women have less ability in math than men. Thus, when she succeeds it must be due to her greater effort. Because the idea of women succeeding through effort is strong, it is also possible that girls will interpret positive feedback as meaning that they work hard rather than that they have ability. Some suggestive evidence supporting this possibility was found by Parsons, Kaczala, & Meece (1982). They found a positive relationship between teacher praise and boys' self-confidence but no relationship for girls. Teachers and counsellors need to be aware of the possibility of their bias that girls succeed in math through effort rather than ability and to encourage young women to think of themselves as people with ability in and potential for math, as well as people who can and do work hard at math.

It is important to recognize and value the importance of hard work in math. Clearly math, like other disciplines, requires hard work. However, young women need to change the balance of their perceptions to include ability as well as hard work. Another myth that educators and counsellors need to be aware of is that ability more than effort is required for success in math. It is very difficult if not impossible to measure pure ability for math. The belief that only gifted people can succeed in math and sciences is particularly dangerous for young women who are thought by their parents, peers, teachers and themselves to succeed mainly through effort. Perhaps one way to counter this is to encourage young women to evaluate their hard work as an important asset for both their current and future success in math. It may be equally important to encourage young men to value the importance of effort as well as ability as contributing to their success in math. Women's attributions of success in math to effort are disadvantageous only in a context that views math as an ability domain. If math were viewed as a discipline in which hard work was equal in importance to ability, then women's effort attributions would not be disadvantageous.

One might expect women's greater vulnerability to lead to their dropping out of science programs at a higher rate than men. As we discussed in the introduction, women do participate at much lower rates than men in advanced training programs in the physical and applied sciences, all of which require advanced math courses. We also have some data from a follow-up interview conducted one year after our questionnaire data were obtained. At this time students were either in first year CEGEP (n = 68), in the labor force (n = 5), unemployed (n = 6), or repeating their final year of high school (n = 6). In this follow-up interview two girls and one boy had changed programs. In all three cases the change was away from science. When asked about their intentions for the following year, three boys and two girls indicated they planned to change. The three boys and one girl were planning to move out of a science program while one girl was considering transferring into a science program. Although these numbers are very small, they indicate the importance of adequate math science preparation at the high school level. Furthermore, the pattern we found is consistent with other studies. In a longitudinal study that followed students from high school graduation to age 29, Wise (1985) found that many students who planned to pursue a science career in Grade 12 later abandoned these plans but virtually none of the students who did not plan a science career in Grade 12 later went into science. Although both women and men leave rather than enter science programs after high school, women drop out at a greater rate. In one study of how high school math courses act as a filter for university science programs, Melon (1980, cited in Fox, 1981) divided students into two groups – those with more than six semesters of high school math and those with fewer than six semesters. Among students with more than six semesters, slightly less than 50% of the women and 60% of the men were enrolled in quantitative areas of study at university. Among students with fewer than six semesters of high school math, 29% of the females and 40% of the males were involved in a quantitative area of study. Thus, although having taken few math courses made it less likely that students would pursue a quantitative university program, this "filter" operated more strongly for women than for men. Furthermore, among university seniors who had elected a quantitative major in their first year, 41% of the females and 56% of the males were still enrolled in a quantitative major.

As we can see from these studies, women's lower participation in scientific professions cannot be totally accounted for by their being "filtered" out because of inadequate math background. Another important factor is illustrated by our results concerning students' future expectations about employment when their children were young. In this study, young women, whether planning for a science program or not, expect that their spouses – but not they themselves – will work full-time when they have young children. Furthermore, other studies show that their parents share these perceptions, even in the case of highly talented young women (Brody & Fox, 1980). This may have important consequences for young women staying in science programs. To the extent that they perceive, and scientific professions require, full-time involvement for continued participation and success, young women are at a disadvantage relative to young men if they plan to take on a disproportionate amount of the responsibility for child rearing. This finding relates to a theory proposed by Maines

(Fennema, 1985) about informal barriers to women's participation in math. Using the work of Gilligan (1982) he argues that in relation to math men live in a focussed world while women live in a diffuse world. What he means by this is that men can have a world that revolves around math and related activities and careers, while the woman's world will include not only math but also a range of interpersonal concerns. Thus, women however much they may be interested and talented in math, also have other competing commitments. He says:

> The ideology of women deflects them away from focused attention on mathematics and their life structures militate against their career pursuit of it . . . mathematics is transformed in their ideology and life structures into either an interesting but socially irrelevant area of activity or into a main involvement whose place in their lives is compromised by other commitments. (Fennema, 1985: 317)

In her extensive work on young women and mathematics, Sherman (1983) comes to a similar conclusion:

> After several years of research, it is my opinion that it is neither anxiety nor lack of ability that keeps women from mathematics. It is a network of sex-role influences which makes mathematics, and the careers mathematics are needed in, appear incongruent with the female role, especially motherhood. When girls see that motherhood and demanding careers can be combined, a major source of resistance to mathematics will disappear. (p. 342)

The conflict for women between family and career that is indicated by students' expectations concerning future employment is validated by women who have gone on to become mathematicians. Luchins (1976) asked female and male mathematicians if their sex had influenced their careers. Only 30% of the men but 70% of the women answered yes to this question. The men cited as examples of how being male had influenced their careers: the draft, getting positions women did not, and having more time for their career. The women's examples focussed on family/career conflicts, such as their career being interrupted by their family, their residence being determined by their husband's, and difficulty combining family and career. Helson (1980) compared highly creative mathematicians and writers with average achievers of the same sex in each field. She found that creative men in both fields differed from comparison men in their ambition to accomplish great things and achieve fame. Creative women on the other hand differed from comparison women in both fields by their willingness to subordinate other activities to their professional goals.

It is clear from the above discussion and findings that science education needs to focus on more than purely scientific concerns in order to encourage the participation of women. Information on the positive aspects of good day care may be very useful information to young women considering science. The importance and advantage of paternal involvement with children is relevant to young male scientists. It is important for educators and students to work to change the system so that it might better meet women's as well as men's needs.

Important questions to ask are: How might scientific jobs be structured differently so that all young scientists could be involved in scientific careers and in raising young children? How can a part-time work career in science be made possible for both men and women who might choose it? How might men be persuaded to become involved in child-rearing tasks to the same extent as women? The answers to these questions are difficult and require change on the part of social institutions as well as individuals. Although this paper has focussed on individual students' attitudes, individual attitude change is only part of the solutions to the problem of women's under-representation in math and science.

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Notes

[1] These classes were not randomly sampled. As is usual in studies of high school students' attitudes toward math, schools and specific classes are chosen because a particular school board, principal, or teacher is willing to take part in the study. Because these classes were not randomly sampled, it is not possible to generalize with certainty to the province of Quebec or to Canada. However, given that middle- and lower-class schools and two streams (regular and enriched) were included, at least the results are not necessarily limited to students with a very narrow socio-economic or educational background.

[2] $x^2 = 4.77$, $p < .05$ The x^2 (chi square) test is designed to give probability that the distribution observed could have occurred by chance. The lower the probability the less likely it is that the result is due to chance. In this case the probability that differences in the proportion of males and females choosing science programs was due to chance, was less than 5 in 100 ($p < .05$).

[3] The classification of the socio-economic status of the schools is based on Laroche (1985). This document assigns each school in Quebec a rating based on the economic status of the neighborhood it serves. A higher rating indicates a lower SES. The mean rating for all schools in Quebec is 15.7. The middle-class school used in this study has a rating of 7.3 and the lower-class school one of 26.6.

[4] $F(1, 85) = 7.41$, $p < .01$ The analyses of variance used in this study were 2 x 2 (sex x choice) analyses that give three probability results: (1) a main effect for choice of science which indicates whether the science and non-science students differed regardless of sex; (2) a main effect for sex which indicates whether the males and females differed regardless of program choice; and (3) an interaction between

sex and choice which indicates whether there was a different pattern of results for science and non-science students depending on their sex (or vice versa). What this particular analysis tells us is that intrinsic interest students who chose science liked math more than students who did not (i.e. a main effect for choice), but that males and females did not differ in their liking of math (i.e. no significant main effect for sex). Also there was not a significant interaction between sex and choice of science.

[5] $x^2 = 12.99, p < .001$

[6] Main effect for choice: $F(1, 85) = 20.47, p < .001$

[7] Main effect for choice: $F(1, 85) = 4.87, p < .05$

[8] Main effect for sex: $F(1, 85) = 7.4, p < .01$

[9] Main effect for choice: $F(1, 85) = 12.4, p < .001$

[10] $x^2 = 10.7, p < .005$

[11] $x^2 = 4.64, p < .05$

[12] Main effect for sex: $F(1, 85) = 4.42, p < .05$

[13] Main effect for choice: $F(1, 85) = 13.09, p < .001$

[14] $x^2 = 8.3, p < .02$

[15] $x^2 = 3.66, p < .07$

[16] $x^2 = 8.95, p < .005$

[17] $x^2 = 18.1, p < .0001$

[18] $x^2 = 42.4, p < .0001$

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6

Course Enrollment in the High School: The Perspective of Working-Class Females[1]

Jane S. Gaskell

One way that schools create differences among students is by enrolling them in different courses. This process of differentiation sets students on different paths towards adulthood. Academic courses prepare students for the university and for professional and managerial jobs. Industrial arts courses orient students towards blue-collar work. Math and science courses allow them to enter technological fields. Business courses teach them what is involved in secretarial or sales jobs. Home economics courses prepare them for domestic tasks. In a very concrete organizational form, one can see the genesis of the divisions that shape adult life.

There is a good deal of evidence that class, ethnicity, race and gender are related to the courses students take (Breton, 1970; Heyns, 1974; Porter, Porter, and Blishen, 1982). Working-class students and students from minority ethnic and racial groups are less likely to take academic courses. Girls are more likely to take home economics courses and courses that prepare them for clerical and secretarial jobs. Boys are more likely to take industrial arts courses. Course enrollment is thus one way the categories of gender, class, and race are reproduced in the school and are linked to adult social position. Despite its key place in the production of the existing social order, course enrollment has been neglected by educational theorists interested in reproduction; instead, they stress ideology and socialization in the school (e.g., Apple, 1982).

The question of how differential course enrollment comes about needs much more careful empirical and theoretical attention. In the academic literature, terms such as "placed in," "selected," "decided on," "chose," "channeled into," "assigned to," and the noncommittal "end up in" can all be found and are usually assumed, not explored. Ability grouping, which is done solely by the teacher, has been equated with curriculum differentiation (Persell, 1977). In general, the sociological literature assumes that course enrollment patterns are produced by the school, not by the students. It explores the criteria the school uses to sort students (Heyns, 1974; Davis and Haller, 1981) and the role school records and counsellors play in placing students in different tracks (Clark, 1960; Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963; Rosenbaum, 1976). There is, however, a psychological literature that uses models emphasizing students' choices and the importance of students' attitudes, perceptions, self-concepts, and psychological traits (Meece et al., 1982).

The issue is partly empirical and should be studied more carefully. There are important variations between schools and over time in the number and kind of options offered to students and in the relative importance of student choice and school assignment in determining course enrollment. Historically, high schools have moved from a single course of study to a relatively fixed hierarchy of curriculum tracks to a more open system of curriculum options (Boyer, 1983; Porter et al., 1982; Laxer, Traub, and Wayne, 1974). The causes and consequences of these variations need to be explored. It is important to specify the particular arrangements in any school that is being studied. A regression equation that describes the relationships prevailing at one point in time cannot be generalized unless the kinds of institutional arrangements it is describing are known.

There are also variations within schools among different kinds of courses, so it is important to specify which course is being discussed. Bernstein's notions of framing and classification are useful in analyzing these differences (Bernstein, 1975). Enrollment in a tightly framed and classified subject such as English is strongly influenced by the school's assessment of ability. Enrollment in art or music classes is more open to student choice. The two may be linked, as in the school Rosenbaum (1976) studied, where ability grouping in core subjects in the junior high school was translated into a wide variety of curriculum options in the senior high.

The question of choice versus placement involves more than empirically sorting out which model applies in any particular case. It involves theoretical issues of the relationship between individual agency and structure. In every case, both the student's orientation and the school's organization are involved. Even in a relatively open system, school staff limit the available choices, shape the way students see themselves and their options, and offer advice, veiled threats, encouragement, and strongly worded suggestions. In a relatively closed system, students must still comply, but preferably, they are made to see that the courses they are taking are in their best interests. The problem, then, is to reconceptualize the issue in a way that incorporates both the orientation of the student, i.e., individual consciousness, and the organization of the school, i.e., social structure. This takes us to the heart of a major problem in social theory. Structural theories and correspondence theories have for too long regarded individual action as an unproblematic reflection of social structure. They have misrepresented the consciousness of the relatively powerless by assuming it can be constituted as an internalization of the dominant ideological messages. Such claims are empirically incorrect. As Giddens (1979:72) points out, "A good case can be made that only dominant class groups have ever been strongly committed to dominant ideologies ... all social actors, no matter how lowly, have some degree of penetration of the social forms which oppress them." Structural theories also misrepresent power as an entity residing in powerful people or positions rather than in interactions. This underplays the political importance of relatively powerless groups. In Giddens's words, "Power relationships are always two way; that is to say, however subordinate an actor may be in a relationship, the very fact of involvement in that relationship gives him or her a certain amount of power over the other. Those in subordinate positions in social systems are frequently adept at converting whatever resources they possess into some degree of control over the conditions of reproduction of those social systems" (Giddens, 1979:6). Teachers are quite aware of this dialectic in the schools. Students must be actively persuaded of the logic of the educational enterprise, and some are never persuaded.

In emphasizing students' choices, it is important to avoid a model that reifies and decontextualizes their attitudes and traits. As Laws (1976) points out in her discussion of women's work aspirations, motivation is dynamic and responsive to the social context, rather than static and individually "owned." For example, an individual may be hardworking in one setting but lazy in another if the one setting provides more incentives and a more congenial atmosphere than the other.

Willis's work (1977, 1981) is an attempt to deal with these complexities. He explains how a group of working-class lads "chose" working-class jobs, and he incorporates a careful structural analysis of the school and the society in which the choices emerged. He concentrates on the lads' choices: "The difficult thing to explain about how working-class kids get working-class jobs is why they let themselves ... It is much too facile simply to say that they have no choice.... There is no obvious physical coercion and [there is] a degree of self-direction" (Willis, 1977:1). He emphasizes their "sense of activity and practice and what feel like (and are to the participants) circumstances creatively met" (Willis, 1977:3).

In this chapter, I will adopt this theoretical orientation to explore how course enrollment differences arise, an exploration that I will reinforce by emphasizing students' belief that they choose, while embedding their orientations in a specific institutional context. This approach avoids some of the problems in earlier research on course tracking and points to the need for more case studies of specific tracking practices in specific courses and schools.

Method

The information was drawn from a series of interviews with young people in Vancouver, Canada. One hundred male and female students were interviewed in 1976 during their last year of high school. This chapter is based only on the responses of the 47 girls.

The students interviewed came from three high schools, all of which were in neighborhoods that were below the average attainment levels in the 1971 census. Parental occupations could not be systematically surveyed, because the school put restrictions on the questions that I could ask. However, none of the students who volunteered this information had professional parents.

I explained to the students that I was interested in the relationship between school and work, and I asked those who were planning to go to work next year to volunteer for an interview. The guidance counsellors supported the study and urged students to participate. They also tried to ensure that a wide variety of students (from their point of view, of course) were included in the resulting sample. This method of selecting students was dictated by the school; therefore, I cannot guarantee that the sample is representative. However, as the schools themselves are not representative of any known population, other selection procedures would not have increased the confidence with which the results can be generalized. As the social and educational context in which the female students' perceptions were generated is specific, I can make no claims that their perceptions are shared widely by high school females. This research must be treated as a particular case study in a particular setting, not as a report on a representative group of female adolescents. More research on other populations is necessary to explore the issues raised in this study.

The interviews covered the courses a student was taking, her reasons for taking the courses, her response to the courses, her work experience, her work plans, and her views of femininity and of gender divisions at school, at work, and in the family. I use terms like "a few" and "most" to describe their responses, because using the exact numbers would suggest a quantitative certainty that is not warranted by the research design. A second interview was carried out a year later, but information from that interview is not included in this article.

The interview format allowed a fairly extensive discussion of school, work, and gender. It was loose enough to allow the students' own categories and assumptions to emerge. The young people were encouraged to describe how their world was structured and what they liked and disliked about it. They were pushed to explain what they took for granted and to consider what was wrong with alternate routes. Their explanations and common sense emerged in the interviews in a way that a questionnaire would not allow. However, the accounts of motivation elicited in the interviews must be regarded as those the students deemed appropriate in an interview with a university researcher. Different accounts might well have been elicited with different audiences in different settings. When discussing schooling with one's children, when reminiscing with one's schoolmates, or when talking to a university-based interviewer, different rules apply and different accounts are appropriate. I have no way of checking how the accounts students gave me differ from or are similar to other accounts. Can we make any statements about what students know or what they believe without specifying the context in which the account is given? Some would say no (Mishler, 1979). However, the value of the interview is in eliciting a public account. These accounts are important because they challenge some of the interpretations of course choice that have been provided in the academic literature. They are also politically important, because they constitute public discourse.

The process of coding and analyzing the interview comments was complex. The interviews were transcribed and read several times. They were then analyzed by sorting comments into categories such as division of labor in the home, bringing up children, and the importance of work for women. Profiles of individual students were also developed in order to understand the interrelationships among attitudes. The original transcripts were often reread by more than one research assistant in order to check for accuracy and relevant additional information.

The Vancouver schools have little ability grouping before grade 10, and curriculum options open up, subject to a complex set of distribution requirements, in grade 11. The options are defined not as ability tracks but as a series of choices in different departments – music, history, business education, French, home economics, and so on. Relatively speaking, the process seems fairly open to student and parent input. The official school board policy is that enrollment decisions are ultimately the responsibility of the family, although the school has some input. The student handbook states that course decisions are "a joint responsibility shared by students, parents, and staff, to ensure a suitable program is undertaken, but final responsibility rests with the parents." This is different from the school policies described by Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) and Rosenbaum (1976).

Instead of focusing on all course choices, which I assume are handled in the same way, this article focuses on the choice of business courses. There are two reasons this particular choice is important. First, choosing business courses means opting out of the academic, i.e., high-status, stream. This is an important step towards reproducing one's position in the working class. Academic courses prepare students for postsecondary schooling. Professional and managerial jobs are likely to require postsecondary schooling; working-class jobs do not. Much of the concern about curriculum differentiation has arisen from its functions in segregating and channeling working-class children (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Lazerson and Grubb, 1974).

Second, the enrollment in business courses is overwhelmingly female. This gender division in course enrollment corresponds to the sexual segregation of the labor force. Secretarial and sales jobs have all the characteristics of quintessentially female work – little responsibility and power, low pay, and little room for advancement. Thus, the girls in this study chose courses that were likely to reproduce not only their class position but also their subservient gender position.

The Issue of Choice

There is a good deal of evidence that students believe they choose their curriculum track, whatever the coercive practices of the school actually are.

Jencks et al. (1972) note that 84 percent of all students surveyed in the Coleman report said they were in the track they chose. Rosenbaum (1976) reports that 87 percent of his noncollege students stated that they chose the track they were in. Davis and Haller (1981) also found a strong relationship between what students chose and where they ended up. They note that two-thirds of those whose choices are discrepant with their placement are in a higher track than the one they chose, which reinforces the importance of understanding what makes nonacademic curricula attractive to students.

The girls interviewed in this study were no different. It was striking that they saw themselves as completely responsible for their curriculum choices: "I did what I wanted. It made sense to me." They provided a variety of reasons for taking the courses they did and rarely mentioned pressure from their parents or the school.

Only a couple of girls directly attributed their course enrollment to the guidance counsellor or the school:

> The counsellors look at your grades. So I took commercial ... basically because my counsellor told me. She seemed to think I would be better fitted to these courses.
>
> I wanted to take academics, but they wouldn't let me.

These comments suggest a number of things that have been pointed out in the literature. Grades are important, and curriculum tracks have many features similar to ability tracks. Moreover, counsellors can take an active role that goes beyond formal school policy. But the Vancouver counsellors appeared to have neither the authority, resources, nor respect to play a critical role in course selection.

> The counsellors we've got here are just completely terrible. They don't know what they're doing ... to tell you the truth, I think [names the school] counsellors just don't get enough training or whatever it takes to become a counsellor.
>
> There is not enough counsellors. They're having to take care of a whole grade of people. They're spending most of their time running through the papers and there's not much time for them to sit around and rap.
>
> Counsellors are no good. [They are] just phys. ed. teachers who have been moved to guidance.

Many of the students felt that counsellors could be ignored, and they exercised their power to disregard them.

> The counsellors suggested daycare, but that means one or two more years at Langara [a community college]. I don't want more school. The counsellor kept saying you'll never get a job unless you can type. But I just picked what I'd enjoy.

Like guidance counsellors, parents infrequently had a direct influence on course selection. Although they were given the official and legal responsibility for course choices, they were not part of the everyday processes of the school and thus were least likely to be well informed. Few students reported a direct intervention by their parents. Most of the students said that their parents let them do whatever they wanted: "They let me make up my own mind." If advice was offered, it was to include academic courses and to keep open the options for postsecondary education.

> My parents encouraged me to take arts and sciences to go to university and be a teacher.
>
> My dad advised science. I didn't like science, but I figured he knew better. But now I wish I had taken more business courses. They were what I really liked. I thought they were fun.

These students saw themselves making choices, often creative ones, designed to resolve the dilemmas that arose out of the structure of schooling, femininity, and work. Understanding why they took certain courses thus involves understanding their reasoning, rather than simply understanding the power and interests of parents, teachers, and guidance counsellors. Their assumption of responsibility for course choice was important because it led them to accept the consequences of their choices and to blame themselves for the restricted options they faced later. It affected the organization and morale of the school, because students tended not to blame or feel beholden to the teachers or counsellors on issues of course enrollment. In these ways, the students' consciousness both drew on the existing structures and served as part of the process of recreating those structures.

Why Choose Nonacademic Courses? The Reproduction of Class

One of the major divisions among courses is between academic courses, which fulfill the prerequisite for university entrance, and other courses, which do not. Most of the literature on tracking has conceived of a single vertical axis of differentiation with academic courses at the top. The use of this axis arises from and clearly displays the class hierarchy involved in course selection.

The student handbook highlights the importance of the postsecondary/no postsecondary divide by printing the entrance requirements for universities and community colleges. Course descriptions clearly indicate those courses that are designed for postsecondary students:

> This is a valuable course for students in preparation for further English courses at the university.
>
> This course is required for most universities and technical institutions.
>
> Feedback from BCIT, Langara and university students indicate this course is of tremendous advantage to biology related courses in their area.

The handbook also indicates the academic ability required for entrance:

> A better than average achievement in English is necessary for success in this course.
>
> An average or better mark in mathematics correlates well with success.

In emphasizing the relationship between a student's achievement and her choice of academic courses, schools construe class differences as achievement and ability differences. Those who are less bright take vocational courses and get working-class jobs. Such is the IQ ideology (Bowles and Gintis, 1976) or the masking of cultural privilege through an ideology of unequal giftedness (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979).

Was this the perspective of these girls? A few girls did describe their choice of courses in light of some fairly stable notions of their abilities and their personalities, which suggest a hierarchical world in which brains and hard work are rewarded:

> I'm not university material. I don't have that much brains.
>
> I'm lazy. I wouldn't work unless I have to.

But most of these girls believed that their choices arose not out of their unequal giftedness but out of a quite sensible inability to tolerate the pointlessness and childishness of school. They did not like school, especially the academic courses, and they did not think that what they could learn there was useful. They suggested that in such an environment, any reasonable person would opt out:

> It was ridiculous .... Maybe ten minutes of it you can learn. School is boring. You can't change it.
>
> I don't like the rigid system – hour after hour – or demanding notes if you are sick or late. I miss classes because I won't be missing anything.
>
> I stared out the window and at my hands, like everyone else.

These girls questioned the justificatory ideology of the school rather than being socialized into it. They located difficulties in the educational environment that confronted them and in the lack of decent opportunities that existed there, instead of in their own abilities and attitudes. But this unmasking of the school's ideological rationale did not lead them to challenge the organization of the school. It led them to find ways around it, to try to pick the best set of courses they could out of a bad lot.

They tried to come up with personal solutions that would minimize the discomfort school caused them. They took courses that were easy (i.e., courses that did not intrude too much into other, more important aspects of life), fun (i.e., courses that involved less time sitting at a desk, more work experience, and more interaction), and useful (i.e., courses that transmitted skills that had some direct utility in the labor market or in leisure activities). These criteria led them far away from an academic program.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) suggest different motives for the selection of vocational courses – motives deduced from structural differences in the schooling and work experiences of working-class and middle-class families. Working-class jobs and vocational courses are more likely to be characterized by alienation, a clear hierarchy of control, and punitiveness (see also Oakes, 1982). Therefore, working-class families prefer stricter, more routinized educational practices. Similarly, "... that professional and self-employed parents prefer a more open atmosphere and a greater emphasis on motivational control is a reflection of their position in the division of labour" (Bowles and Gintis, 1976:133). Track assignment, they conclude, springs from working-class students' self-concepts and preferences, which are appropriate to their future position as work.

Such a straightforward correspondence does not characterize the consciousness of the girls in this study. They saw course differences in more substantive terms. They rejected academic schooling not because it was too open but because they believed it was irrelevant. Vocational courses were perceived as less regimented and less confining than academic courses. Other studies suggest that this explains a good deal of the appeal of work/study and career awareness courses (Farrar, De Sanctis, and Cowden, 1980; Watts, 1980).

Willis explains that his lads chose working-class jobs because they valued manual labor over mental labor, they resisted authority, and they wanted diversion and enjoyment. Though these girls were more diverse in their cultural traditions and expressions of disenchantment with mental labor than Willis's lads, there were some common themes in their responses. They were quite able to question the educational paradigm that asserts the fair exchange of cooperation and work for knowledge and moral superiority. They wanted a break from regular schooling and saw practical job skills as more worthwhile than irrelevant academic information.

The girls' accounts construe course divisions as horizontal rather than vertical: Some people like some things, others like different things. However, they live in a world where higher marks and academic pursuits are associated with higher status, more economic opportunities, and more money. In schools, marks are the official currency and, as the course descriptions make clear, high marks go with academic courses. It is hard for an aware participant in the school or the society to ignore completely the vertical nature of the divisions.

These young women produced accounts of course differences that indicate an awareness of the hierarchical nature of school programs. According to these girls, students in academic courses "think they're better." "University is necessary to really get ahead these days." These comments were not offered as easily or as often as other accounts, but the contradictions and diversity they indicate must not be ignored. To some extent, different students produced different emphases in their accounts. A few were more likely to say, in effect, "I am dumb and the bright kids go on to university." Other students were more likely to indicate that school is boring and that anyone sensible would have as little to do with it as possible. But sometimes, one individual gave contradictory accounts. These contradictions suggest, as Sennett and Cobb (1972) have indicated, that there are hidden injuries associated with nonparticipation in academic success, even when cultural forms and an understanding of oppressive relations make alternative meanings available. These injuries are hidden in that they are not easily elicited in interviews with higher-status persons. They may be produced more often in the kind of in-depth and personal discussions used by Sennett and Cobb.

Does this mean the girls really believed that they were inferior or that the system was unjust? The question is unanswerable in these terms. Both kinds of accounts are real. Different methodologies will reveal more of one than of the other. What is at issue in this study are public, everyday, easily and frequently elicited responses. These, as mentioned previously, have both political and practical significance in the school and in the labor market. The girls discussed the choice of vocational courses as a decision to avoid the worst stresses and irrelevancies of school. The structure and organization of school was critical for them. They suggested that if school work had been more involving or more useful, they might have chosen otherwise. Their acquiescence in the process of selecting themselves out rested on their understanding of the school experience. Their critique of school did not go very far. It focused on individual teachers, counsellors, and specific course content rather than on the organization of the entire venture. It did not lead these girls to suggest much in the way of alternatives except better teachers and more work experience (Gaskell and Lazerson, 1981). They overwhelmingly rejected the value of school and the school's equation of academic performance with merit and deserved power, but they accepted the school's power to create links between academic performance and success in the labor market.

Why Take Business Courses? The Reproduction of Gender Divisions

In the high schools I studied, not a single girl took industrial education at the grade 12 level, but almost all the girls who were not planning to continue their schooling took at least one business course. The gender segregation of courses is very large, but its existence has been ignored in the literature on tracking because a single vertical axis has been used to describe the differences among courses: "The use of the terms high, average and low track classes seemed to cut through the terminology differences at the different schools and levels, and identify classes according to their essential characteristics in terms of student classification" (Oakes, 1982:201). Although a unidimensional vertical ranking of courses displays class divisions, it makes gender divisions disappear. Girls are just as likely to be in the high-track, academic courses. Gender divisions appear as horizontal divisions within each track – for example, as language versus science options in the academic track, or as business versus industrial options in the vocational track.

Gender divisions in the school curriculum correspond to divisions in the labor force, just as class divisions do. The correspondence between school tracks and gender divisions must be taken as seriously as the correspondence between school tracks and class divisions. Occupational segregation by gender has influenced the way curriculum options are defined at school, and the organization of this school training has affected the shape of occupational segregation by providing a generous supply of skilled female workers trained at the public's expense for a narrow range of jobs.

Why did the girls choose the business courses and not the industrial courses? There were four factors that were mentioned in their accounts: the advantages of clerical work, the availability of specific skill training in business courses, the lack of opportunities in industrial work, and the impact of domestic labor.

The girls overwhelmingly chose clerical courses in order to prepare themselves for clerical jobs. The course descriptions make clear that this is the purpose of the courses. In the school calendar, the business course descriptions stress usefulness in the labor market, specifically in secretarial work: "as many types of written language projects as are relevant to office work will be included"; "should be capable of handling books in a small business firm"; "qualifies a student for a high standard secretarial position." These are the courses that were most attractive to the girls. Other, more general courses attracted a greater mixture of males and females. These include courses in general business ("investing your money, conditions of employment, homeownership and mortgages, etc."); accounting, marketing, and distributive education ("to develop in the student personality and skills which will enable him to become an intelligent consumer and achieve success in the field of marketing"); career exploration ("to overcome the tendency of students to drift into careers with the result that they find their jobs largely unfulfilling"); and personal finance ("to enable students to make the best possible use of their income through sound money management").

Why is clerical work attractive? Most importantly because they are the jobs that are the most easily available to women in a competitive labor market.

> I don't like typing, but it is the easiest way to get a job. It's boring and tedious just sitting there. But if you can get a job you might as well take it.
>
> The only jobs are for secretaries these days. You might as well get trained.
>
> (I took commercial courses) because I wanted to be someone's secretary. You know there is a big demand for secretaries.

This perception, many would argue, is a misguided one. They would claim that clerical jobs are disappearing with the introduction of new technology, that there are more opportunities for women in other areas of work (Menzies, 1981). But one-third of all employed Canadian women and over half of all employed female high school graduates work in clerical jobs (Statistics Canada, 1980). The girls accurately perceived that there are a large number of clerical jobs of many different types in many different locations. The women they knew who had jobs had clerical jobs. It is difficult for a counsellor or a new economic survey to discount the students' overwhelming experience of where the jobs are.

Moreover, the literature on youth employment shows that youth are twice as likely to be unemployed as adults are and that they tend to take the first job that comes along (Osterman, 1980; Blackburn and Mann, 1979). In a period of economic crisis, this is even more pronounced. Instead of choosing a job, the job chooses them. As one girl put it, "If you can get a job, you might as well take it."

Clerical work has other attractions besides its relative availability. It has higher status than blue-collar work and provides more security and better working conditions. When asked why she took commercial courses, one student responded,

> To fall back on commerce. My mother forced me to. She is a janitoress and she said I could do better than her. She sees all these women working in an office and she said you're going to do better than that.

It provides a setting that is comfortable to work in, where there are likely to be other young working-class women to socialize with. It is attractive because it is a women's occupation.

> Girls together can be funny and dirty. I can be more open with women around.

The organization of training for clerical work also provides an incentive to take commercial courses. The girls pointed out that these courses were directly relevant to finding a job, unlike other courses in the high school. The courses in industrial education prepare students not to enter a trade but to embark on trades training after graduation ("recommended for students going on in engineering or architecture"; "designed to fulfill the requirements for admission to vocational school") or to develop avocational skills ("the skills necessary to repair and maintain his own vehicle"; "constructing a stereo") and sometimes intellectual skills ("to illustrate the fundamental principles of science"). They do not provide the edge in the labor market that commercial skills do. If anything, they have such low status that employers and community colleges prefer academic students. Carpentry courses do not make one a carpenter. One still has to go through an apprenticeship. The same is true for other industrial arts courses and for the home economics courses.

Only commercial courses provide skills that give an immediate advantage in the labor market. If they did not learn to type and understand office work, the girls were running the risk of getting no job at all. In a competitive labor market, taking clerical courses was the best way these young women could prepare themselves for the jobs that they saw as available to them.

This view that business courses are the only sensible option for nonacademic girls was shared even by young women who could provide extremely negative accounts of clerical work and business courses. They regarded these as boring or, at best, "not so bad": "It's always inside and just sitting down at the desk and doing nothing." These girls felt pressed to take the business courses "to fall back on" in case they couldn't find another job. The courses were a safety net, the wisest choice because they were directly relevant to finding a job.

If the advantages of office work and training were not enough to attract a girl, the disadvantages of the male alternative, industrial work, were likely to repel her. Many of the girls felt that the industrial courses and industrial work were difficult, dirty, and uninteresting. The most common response to the question "Why didn't you take industrial education?" was "I'm not interested."

> It's o.k. for girls to do what they want – be carpenters or whatever. But it's not for me. I just don't like it.

They described how socialization had shaped their responses:

> Maybe it's the way I've been brought up.
>
> We've always been taught to be the soft touch, like the cute sex, just sitting there.
>
> I was pushed away from it as a little girl – dolls, not hockey and trucks.

They even had plans to change it:

> I think [girls] should be encouraged into other jobs, but not just from our age. I think from elementary school, because you get dolls and the little guys get trucks. So you're always influenced on that kind of a path.
>
> You've got to be trained from the beginning to make things equal. I'd like to start a camp. I wouldn't tell the kids who were boys and who were girls. No girls' and boys' bathroom. Everyone would be exposed to everything – trucks and dolls.

But given their current interests and achievements, it did not make sense to do industrial work.

Some girls, despite their socialization, were interested in industrial work:

> I like to do the jobs men do. I think they are more interesting.
>
> I wish I had taken woodwork. I like working with wood.
>
> It would be exciting to be a truckdriver. But I wouldn't know how to go about it.
>
> Men's jobs pay more.

Thus, the status, activity, money, and even unfamiliarity of male work gave it a certain appeal.

However, their perception of barriers inside and outside the school came into play. Peer and teacher pressure, which often amounted to sexual harassment, made industrial courses a very difficult choice.

> When I was going into grade 10, I tried it (auto) but it was a mistake. There were all guys in the class and I felt too stupid.
>
> The second year I was the only girl in the class, and I felt really stupid, so I didn't want to go back.
>
> This year I got into Auto Mechanics 12. It was all guys and when I walked in they thought I was really stupid. You know, "Oh, we got a girl," and they were irate, so I transferred out.
>
> Because I am a girl, and there are only boys taking the courses, I'd get a name in the school. Girls are rowdy who take it.
>
> The teacher is a male and he doesn't encourage females. He gives us mostly written work. We used to complain, and he would say, "Well, the boys can do it for you." He probably thought it (auto class) was dangerous for us.

Barriers in the labor market also seemed to make industrial courses a waste of time:

> They wouldn't hire a female. It distracts everyone.
>
> I was thinking of going for an electrician, and then someone said something: "What? You're a girl!"

Furthermore, they felt that the working conditions would be difficult:

> Truck drivers are weird people and they would harass her.
>
> You couldn't talk about the same things if men were around – what you did last night, and all that.

Thus, socialization and the perception of opportunities combined to make industrial education a much less favored option. Socialization did not "take" with all the girls; but the perception of opportunities ensured that even those who were not traditional in their interests still chose the traditional options.

A final factor in course selection was the issue of domestic labor. Most of the girls assumed that they would have primary responsibility for the domestic labor in their families (Gaskell, 1983). This by no means arose from a wholesale endorsement of the domestic ideology. Although about a quarter of the girls said domestic work was what they were particularly suited for and wanted to do, most said they would feel trapped at home, wanted the independence provided by a paying job, and said housework was a chore that should be shared. But they wanted husbands and they wanted children, so they felt they would have to do the domestic work for a variety of reasons based in their perception of the world and the opportunities available to them. Men, they said, would not or could not do it.

> Sharing the housework would be wonderful. But it is not going to happen.

> He'd [boyfriend] never help with the floors or the dishes. I know him too well.

Alternate forms of childcare, which could free them for a paying job, were perceived to be inadequate. No man could or would stay home with the kids.

> Men aren't used to it and don't want to do it.
>
> Daycares and babysitters are not good for children.
>
> You'll be a better mother if you stay home with the kids and not throw them out with the babysitter . . . because they learn bad habits.

Moreover, as women, they were likely to be contributing less to the family income than their husbands; so they felt they should be the ones to pick up the extra domestic work and, when necessary, give up their paying jobs.

> The most practical approach would be the one with the most money would work.

As a result of all these calculations, even those girls who had no particular desire to do domestic labour expected to drop out of the labour force or work part-time when they had small children. Even though many assumed that they would return to work after their children had grown up, their views of this later period were very hazy. What they planned for was largely the next five to ten years. The wanted to get their training over with quickly so that they could get a job and have some independence for a few years. They were less likely than boys to feel that they had years to explore the labour market. This added to the attractiveness of business courses and clerical jobs. They could do their training quickly in high school, and the training would develop a skill that would always be useful and flexible. Furthermore, clerical jobs were relatively available and could be pursued part-time.

What these young women knew about their world produced the obvious choice of business courses. They saw a world in which business courses had many advantages and industrial courses had few. Their knowledge was based in some very tangible structural conditions – the opportunity structure in the labour market, the vocational role of business courses, the existence of sexual harassment in male occupations, and the assumption of family responsibilities by women. These are "penetrations" of the structure, seeing it as it is. The girls sometimes objected to this structure. They did not like sexual harassment in class. They felt that employers should hire women in nontraditional jobs. They did not want to do all the domestic chores in the home. But for all these perceptions of different conditions for men and women and their professed commitment to equality of opportunity, their conscious, rational, self-preserving calculations helped to reproduce gender segregation for themselves and others. They did not see this as a predetermined or imposed fact but as one they actively chose as best for themselves.

There were different routes to the same decisions. Some girls incorporated domestic ideology more fully than others. Some resisted secretarial work more strongly than others. Some found the option of work in male areas more tempting than others. While their choices may not have been made with the sense of elation and confidence that Willis's lads expressed, they were regarded as reasonable, even good solutions to the problems the social structure confronted them with. What is striking is not that some girls resisted, but that despite their resistance, so many of them continued to choose very traditional paths through school, paths that reproduced both class and gender categories.

Discussion

Why is it important to examine the girls' perceptions of the world? It scarcely needs to be pointed out that these girls did not produce adequate analytic accounts of the process of course selection in high schools. Their representations are interpretations, as all accounts are, involving selecting, highlighting, cutting and editing. In their stories, they underplayed some of the things they knew in order to maintain their own dignity. They used the same factors that others used to justify different choices. Their information on labor markets, men, teachers, and so on, was based on specific experiences and particular ideological assumptions.

However, these accounts highlight some aspects of school and work and gender relations that are concealed by other investigations. As Smith (1977:16) points in a brief history of the development of the women's movement, "Shifts in the women's movement came about in part as women from other places than those originating the movement began to be heard and listened to – housewives, for example, who refused to be despised, women who had children or wanted children and could not accept the derogation of motherhood that was important in the early stages. . . . Issues and analyses had to shift and deepen accordingly."

A political process is different from an academic one, but the conception of how new knowledge is developed is useful. Working-class women's knowledge of the world and the questions they ask have not been part of academic discourse. Awareness of their views challenges the silence of social science on some issues and points to the biases inherent in the formulation of others.

These young, white, working-class women stressed their self-direction in selecting courses, challenging academic work that construes them as simply assigned to places by the school. They highlighted the importance of job opportunities and sexual harassment in course choice, issues that have often been overlooked in school-based research. They pointed out the unique role high school business courses play in providing saleable skills, which raises structural and historical questions about why business education was incorporated into the school curriculum in a form that so closely reproduces work relations and skills, while industrial and home economics courses take a form that is much less closely linked to work. Certifiable training for industrial jobs remains outside the high school.

These girls stressed the role of domestic labour in career planning and course choice. They challenged the view that the important differences between courses can be represented by one vertical axis of academic respectability and that vocational courses are more attractive because they are more closely supervised. These are all perspectives that need to be added to the literature on curriculum differentiation in the high school.

Second, an understanding of the perspectives of these girls gives us a more adequate understanding of how class and gender research on education has tended to assume that reproduction occurs when the relatively powerless internalize the views of the powerful. Studies of schooling have emphasized a process of socialization to the hidden curriculum, which ensures acquiescence and explains students' consciousness. Analyses of what the school's message is – the IQ ideology, the traditional gender code – have substituted for analyses of the students' understanding of these messages. This approach produces theories of reproduction in which subordinate groups appear as "cultural dopes," so oversocialized into dominant ideologies that they cheerfully behave in ways that counter their own experience of the world, as well as their own interests. Its factual claims are wrong: People do not so completely believe dominant ideologies. Its political and policy implications are also profoundly undemocratic. Such an approach treats subordinate groups as misguided, backward, and conservative rather than as aware and self-directed actors in a world that is stacked against them. It thus suggests that they will have little that is useful to say about what changes should take place.

The limits of socialization and the more problematic nature of consent have been increasingly recognized in studies of the labour process, and some of the parallels to schooling are worth noting. From Braverman's (1974) assumption of management's power to control the conditions of production, we have moved to studies of "contested terrain" (Edwards, 1979), "manufacturing consent" (Burawoy, 1979), and working-class culture (Palmer, 1979). There is also a tradition in feminist scholarship that has emphasized that women's consciousness is not simply an internalization of male forms but contains its own alternate interpretations, commitments, and connections (Rowbotham, 1973; Olsen, 1978; Rubin, 1976; Janeway, 1980; Bernard, 1981; Gilligan, 1982; Finn and Miles, 1982). The relation between women's consciousness and man's world is complex and involves accommodation, resistance, and self-imposed and externally imposed silences. Correspondence does not account for their relationship.

This brings the issue of structural change back into an intimate, but dialectical rather than mechanical, relation with consciousness. For these girls, change would have involved a far-reaching shift in their perception of reality. It would have meant new notions of where job opportunities lie, what men are like, and what skills are valued by employers. These beliefs were forged in their daily experiences, and new accounts that contradicted their experience were likely to be found wanting, to be reinterpreted, or to lead to distrust of the source of the new account. They knew, for their own good reasons, what the world was like, and their experience acted as a filter through which any new message was tested, confirmed, rejected, challenged, and reinterpreted. Changing their minds would have meant changing the world they experienced, not simply convincing them of a new set of ideals around equality of opportunity and the desirability of a different world.

Notes

[1] Reprinted from *Sociology of Education*, 58, 1 (January 1985):48-59.

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7

Women and Higher Education In Canadian Society

Neil Guppy, Doug Balson and *Susan Vellutini*

Background

As a formal, enduring feature of Canadian society, public, state-supported schooling first became organized as a routine aspect of daily life in the middle 1800s. Organized practices such as religious worship and political governance, traditional forms of family structure and economic organization were all firmly entrenched in Canadian social life well before textbooks and classrooms became a regular feature of children's lives. Formal schooling generally, and university education in particular, has enjoyed spectacular growth since the 1800s. One hundred years ago there were only a handful of degree-granting universities and they conferred roughly 600 degrees. In 1985, 65 universities dispensed over 90,000 degrees. In addition, over the course of the century, community colleges have been inaugurated and they have expanded to the point where they now grant over 60,000 diplomas and certificates.

Receiving an education has become an increasingly important component of modern life. Given the payoff of education for finding secure, well-paying jobs and in realizing a diverse array of opportunities, schooling has often been touted as a means for various social groups, including women, to attain equal representation in all areas of social life. For instance, as noted in the report of the *Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada*, "education opens the door to almost every life goal. Wherever women are denied equal access to education they cannot be said to have equality" (1970: 161). Our interest is in examining trends in women's access to and involvement in both universities and community colleges.

During the initial introduction of state-supported public elementary schooling there was relatively little controversy over the *admission* of both girls and boys. The basic tasks of reading and writing were thought to be appropriate and useful for all children, regardless of sex. For example, in British Columbia in 1900 there were 12,069 boys and 11,546 girls enrolled in public schools (Dunn, 1980:20).

Where heated controversy did arise, however, was with the precise role of girls in public schooling, and especially in the programs suitable for girls. Many held that the proper place for a woman was in the home where she alone had the responsibility of looking after husband and children. For example, Egerton Ryerson, an initial force behind publicly supported education in Upper Canada, argued that women's special role was in the home, not in the world of paid employment (see Prentice, 1977:110-11).

The consequence of this view was that while girls were admitted to public elementary schools, attempts were made to restrict their access in certain ways. Prentice (1977) cites a particular 1866 regulation in Upper Canada which had the effect, for purposes of administration, of counting a girl as half a boy. Other practices also acted to discriminate against the full participation of girls. In particular, efforts were undertaken to exclude girls from the classical courses, which were necessary for admission to universities and the professions.

As this implies, admission to university was difficult for women. Despite some early success for selected women, the historical record is one of exclusion rather than inclusion. The first Canadian women began attending university classes in 1858 at Mount Allison University in Nova Scotia. However, it was not until 1875, when Grace Annie Lockhart received a degree, that a woman graduated from a Canadian university (in fact she was the first woman in the British Empire to obtain a university degree). Her degree, from Mount Allison, was, ironically, a Bachelor of Science – an area of study which as we will see later remains a field in which few women earn degrees.

Lockhart's success did not presage a groundswell of support for the idea of women attending universities. Almost the reverse was the case, as can be seen, for example, in a 1876 passage from the *Queen's College Journal* reflecting some of the opposition women faced.

> The degrees of a University we consider inappropriate to ladies for this reason.... [Degrees] only have value when considered with reference to public life, and their bestowal upon women would be a great step towards effectuating the views of the advocates to women's Rights, and opening to them the profession and employments of public life, a consummation devoutly to be deprecated. (Cited in Cook and Mitchinson, 1976: 123)

At the University of Toronto, senior administrators were so adamant in their refusal to admit women that the provincial government was finally forced in 1884 to move an Order in Council allowing women to attend classes (Buckland, 1985: 137). Not surprisingly, this strong opposition made the university a foreign place for most women. While it was true that women could gain admission to university, a climate of hostility shrouded women's participation. Lockhart's success was an exception, not a rule.

The objections to women's participation in university life were many and familiar. Hosek (1986: 15) suggests that the arguments against women entering university in the late 1800s included the view that women were biologically incapable of withstanding the rigors of serious study; that women would lose their feminine appeal; that family life would falter with women pursuing other interests; and that community moral standards would decay if the sexes were allowed to mix at such an "excitable age."

Especially in professional schools these arguments appear to have won many supporters since it was in these programs that women's access was simply not permitted. For example, it was not until after the First World War that women were allowed entrance to McGill's medical school. The restriction on women's admission to professional schools was not a decision university educators took in opposition to prevailing views. As the following doggerel illustrates, the universities were moving in concert with a strong professional opinion:

> I think all lawyers must agree
> On keeping our profession free
> From females whose admission would
> Result in anything but good. (Cited in Cook and Mitchinson, 1976: 167).

Nevertheless, strong opposition did not deter all women and some chose to pursue their studies at university. By 1900, just over ten percent of university students were women. The early attitudes of hostility and the administrative policies, which limited women's participation to certain courses, worked to restrict opportunities for women. As we will see, it took many years for these constraints to ease and for as many women as men to graduate from post-secondary institutions. And, despite much progress, colleges and universities remain male dominated in many areas.

Women's Participation in Higher Education

Enrollment Data

Historically, women and men have averaged almost identical years of schooling. This has been a consequence of two different forces. First, because schooling has been compulsory in most provinces for many years, all children have been required to attend school until reaching some minimum school-leaving age. The second, and more important factor contributing to the similarity in the average years of schooling of women and men, is a combination of two offsetting forces. Relative to men, women have been more likely to complete high school, but of those who do complete high school, fewer women than men have proceeded on to attend a post-secondary institution (see Pineo and Goyder, 1985). Because men have been both high school drop-outs and post-secondary participants, men and women have, on the average, approximately equal years of schooling.

In recent years differences between the sexes in high school drop-out rates and post-secondary participation levels have been reduced. Statistics Canada figures reveal that while in 1950-51 only fifty percent of seventeenyear-olds remained in school, fully ninety-four percent of this age group was still in school in 1984-85 – with little difference between the two sexes. However, while the majority of Canadian teenagers are now graduating from high school, fewer than one in four secondary school graduates, of either sex, choose to proceed to higher education. Here too dramatic recent changes have worked to equalize the enrollments of women and men at both colleges and universities.

From ten percent at the turn of the century, the proportion of women attending university classes had risen to just over twenty percent by 1925. However, as Table 1 reveals, for the next thirty years there was little change and by 1960 still fewer than a quarter of all university students were women. The male university student body had increased to over 80,000 by this time. The most dramatic change occurred at the end of the Second World War when the university enrollments of men were bloated by returning veterans whose education was paid for by the government.

Table 1

Canadian University Full-time Undergraduate Enrollments by Sex

Year	Men	Women	% Women	Total
1925-26	19,580	5,272	21.1	24,852
1930-31	24,148	7,428	23.5	31,576
1935-36	26,028	7,494	22.4	33,522
1940-41	27,710	8,107	23.3	34,817
1945-46	48,991	12,870	26.3	61,861
1950-51	50,170	13,866	21.7	64,036
1955-56	54,545	14,765	21.5	69,310
1960-61	80,582	26,629	24.8	107,211
1965-66	125,859	61,190	32.7	187,049
1970-71	174,945	101,352	36.7	276,297
1975-76	190,410	140,127	42.4	330,537
1980-81	182,362	155,553	46.0	337,915
1983-84	209,000	188,349	47.4	397,349

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Historical Compendium of Education Statistics*, pp. 214-17. Statistics Canada, *Education in Canada*, Cat. # 81-229.

In contrast, the most important period of enrollment increase for women came in the 1960s when their numbers at university rose by almost three hundred percent. Since then, the increasing number of women attending university has continued to grow steadily and the modest decline in male enrollments in the 1970s was not experienced by women. One way of illustrating the different patterns of recent enrollment is to note that in the last thirty years the number of male students has increased four-fold while female enrollments have risen by a factor of thirteen.

Even more dramatic increases in women's post-secondary participation are, however, obscured by using only full-time university enrollment. If all students in university are considered, women now constitute a majority, and have done so since 1980-81. However, women are in this majority position at university as a consequence of their higher part-time participation (in 1983-84 60% of part-time students were women).

A second avenue for women to pursue studies beyond high school has come about with the tremendous expansion of community colleges in recent years. Women have historically dominated in post-secondary non-university educational institutions principally because both nursing and teaching were, prior to the early 1970s, offered outside the university context in teachers' colleges, hospitals, and community colleges. Even after the universities began to offer degrees in nursing and education, women's participation in the growing community college program flourished. Of 316,521 full-time community college students in 1983-84, just over fifty percent, or 161,910, were women.

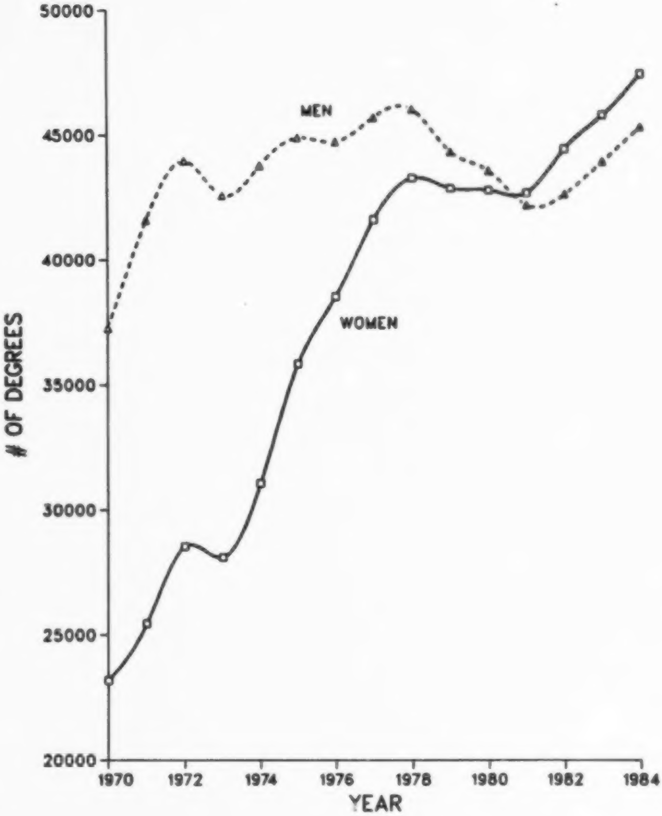
Women now represent the majority of post-secondary students. While more women study part-time or are enrolled at community colleges, the number of women in the higher education sector has exploded in the last thirty years.

Undergraduate Degree Attainment

Women's attainment of undergraduate university degrees has been historically lower than men's, as we would expect given the enrollment patterns discussed in the preceding section. In 1925, fifty years after Lockhart had attained the first degree granted to a woman, just over twenty-five percent of the graduating cohort across Canada was composed of women (1,276 of 4,922 undergraduate degrees went to women in 1925). By 1945 the percentage had risen only a modest six points to thirty-one percent. But in the years immediately following the war, the numbers of women graduates actually declined. Fueled by the return of war veterans and the educational opportunities provided these men, the graduating class numbered 17,185 in 1950 but the percentage of women graduates declined by nine points relative to 1945, falling to twenty-two percent (equivalent to the pre-1925 figure). Not only did the percentage of women graduating decline, but between 1950 and 1955 the absolute number of women graduates dropped by 629 to 3,146. At least part, if not all of this decline, can be accounted for by the pressure on women to return to their family obligations, leaving education and the world of paid work for men (see Buckland, 1985).

By 1965 the percentage of women graduates had returned to the levels of 1945. The next twenty years, but especially the post-1970 era, represented a period of spectacular growth for women's participation. Over the interval from 1970-71 to 1984-85, the number of degrees awarded to women rose by 80% while for men the increase was a very modest 6% (see Figure 1). Furthermore, since 1981-82 more women than men have been acquiring bachelor and first professional degrees. One hundred and seven years after Lockhart graduated from Mount Allison, a roughly equal number of women and men were receiving university degrees – at least at the undergraduate level.

FIGURE 1: UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES BY GENDER



Source: Statistics Canada: Education in Canada.

However, with the growing number of undergraduate degrees awarded, more people chose to extend their education to postgraduate programs. At this level men still acquire the majority of degrees, although at both the M.A. and Ph.D. level dramatic increases for women are evident. As the figures in Table 2 reveal, in the last fifteen years the number of Masters degrees granted by universities has grown by 51.6%, and the number acquired by women has increased by 180.4%. At the Ph.D. level the overall increase in doctorates has been only 15.6%, but the increase for women has been 238.8%. Encouraging as these increases are for women's attainment, men still dominate in graduate schools. The further up the educational hierarchy one looks, the less prevalent is women's participation.

Table 2

Postgraduate Degrees by Sex

	Masters			Doctorate		
Year	Total	Female	% Female	Total	Female	% Female
1970-71	9,609	2,116	22.4	1,625	151	9.3
1975-76	11,555	3,525	30.5	1,693	318	18.8
1980-81	12,432	4,654	37.4	1,738	399	23.0
1981-82	12,903	5,055	39.2	1,816	439	24.2
1982-83	13,110	5,307	40.5	1,715	425	24.8
1983-84	13,925	5,684	40.8	1,821	451	24.8
1984-85	14,572	5,934	40.7	1,878	510	27.2
%Change	51.6	180.4		15.6	238.8	

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Educational Statistics in the Seventies*, Cat. # 81-569. Statistics Canada, *Education in Canada*, Cat. # 81-229.

Success and Performance

In 1925-26, women constituted 21.2% of all university undergraduates; yet in that same year they received 26% of all undergraduate degrees granted by Canadian universities. This imbalance between enrollment and degree is not some historical anomaly. In 1984 women received slightly more than 51% of all the degrees granted, although women constituted only 48% of the total enrollment. In other words, women have historically received a greater percentage of undergraduate degrees than their proportion of enrollments would seem to warrant.

Dennison, Forrester, and Jones (1982: 49), in a study of university completion rates at UBC and the University of Victoria, reported similar findings. Women undergraduate students were more likely than their male counterparts to attain degrees (see Table 3). One interpretation of this gender difference is that women who do enter university are more likely to graduate than are men. Other factors, however, cloud an easy interpretation: men may be enrolled in programs that take longer to complete and this may account for some of the difference; official methods of counting degrees and enrollments may make comparisons difficult; or women may enroll in programs that are easier to complete.

Table 3

Indicators of Student Performance by Sex
University Completion Rates*

	U.B.C.		Univ. of Victoria	
	M	F	M	F
1973	54.4%	58.9%	30.4%	33.3%
1974	50.6%	55.4%	28.9%	30.3%
1975	47.9%	36.5%	30.1%	25.4%

Introductory Course Averages**

	Inorganic Chemistry		Calculus		English		Sociology	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1970-71	5.2	5.7	5.5	5.8	5.0	6.0	5.7	6.4
1975-76	5.4	5.4	5.6	5.9	5.1	5.8	5.9	6.2
1980-81	5.5	5.6	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.9	6.0	6.3

Sources: *Dennison, Forrester, & Jones (1982:49).
**Decore (1984:51-56).

There is, however, additional information that bears on the issue of differences between the sexes with respect to degree attainment. The 1970 *Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* cited testimony reporting that admission requirements for women were higher than for men (1970:171). Discriminatory practices at entrance, only allowing in the very best female students, may historically account for some of women's apparent superiority in obtaining degrees. Decore (1984) provides additional information about gender differences in university performance. Her data (see the bottom panel of Table 3) reveal that when the course grades of women and men are compared, women appear to do slightly better than men. For example, on a scale from 0 to 10 women have received higher marks in a variety of courses, from Inorganic Chemistry to Sociology. Furthermore, this difference was maintained throughout the seventies, although the gap would appear to be closing.

The explanation of these differences is not immediately apparent. It could be that discriminatory attitudes and practices toward women in the educational system deter all but the brightest women from attending university. Or it could be that women are better at doing school work – as Charlotte Whitten once quipped, "women have to do better than men; luckily it's not difficult." Alternatively, it could be the case that women come disproportionately from upper class backgrounds, and therefore with greater support (especially financial) are less likely to drop out of university than men. This latter explanation implies a differential class composition for women relative to men at university, an issue to which we now turn.

Composition

Students from upper status backgrounds have always been over-represented at university. While managerial and professional occupations account for only a small segment of the Canadian labour force, a substantial proportion of university students report having parents from these occupations. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that this inequality by social class has diminished much over time (see Guppy, 1984).

Escande's (1973) findings suggest that among female students this upper status over-representation is even greater than among men. His data suggest that equal percentages of male and female students from upper class backgrounds proceed to university, but that 11% and 19% fewer women than men from the middle and working classes respectively are enrolled in courses leading to university. This suggests that the patterns of increased enrollments and degree attainment noted above may have resulted *not* from a growing participation of all women, but of women disproportionately from upper status backgrounds.

Table 4 contains data consistent with this interpretation. Findings from three national surveys of university students (1968-69, 1974-75, and 1983-84) show that female students are, on all comparisons, more likely than their male peers, to have parents with university degrees. For example, only about 8% of men in the 45 to 65 year old age group (the typical age of university students' fathers) had university degrees. However, in 1983-84, 26% of male and 27% of female students in university had fathers with degrees. Compared with the general population, university students are three times more likely to come from upper status backgrounds, and for women this over-representation is slightly higher. While the gap has narrowed to 1% in the 1983-84 sample (from about 2-3% for 1968-69), women are still more likely than men to enter university from upper status backgrounds

Table 4

Percentage of University Students by Sex whose Mothers or Fathers had University Degrees

University Completion Rates

	Father Had Degree		Mother Had Degree	
	M	F	M	F
1968-69	16.4%	19.5%	6.3%	7.7&
1974-75	21.7%	23.3%	7.2%	9.0%
1983-84	26.0%	27.0%	11.5%	12.5%

Sources: Max von Zur-Muehlen, 1984.

The narrowing of this gap in the proportion of women and men from upper status backgrounds is in keeping with our earlier interpretation of women's apparent success at university relative to men. Even with larger female enrollments, women are still more likely than men to come from higher socio-economic origins, although the gap is closing. Consistent with this is the fact that both for course grades and the degree to enrollment discrepancy, the gap is also narrowing (see Table 3). Our conclusion that the underlying social class composition of female and male university students partially explains the apparent difference in performance levels is speculative but consistent with all the evidence at hand.

One other important consequence of the over-representation at university of upper status women, relative to men, is that while higher education has become more accessible to women, this greater accessibility has not acted to reduce inequalities on the dimension of social class. The rise of community colleges has provided greater opportunities for both women and men from lower status backgrounds to pursue post-secondary education, but even in the college sector class disparities persist (see Guppy, 1984).

The representation of ethnic groups in higher education is another dimension on which research on access has focused. Anisef, Okihiro, and James (1982) compare the university attainment of various ethnic groups to the "large, heterogeneous English mother-tongue group." As early as 1971, most ethnic groups had rates of university attainment approaching the English group. By 1976 four mother-tongue groups, the Germans, Ukrainians, Polish, and Scandinavians, had higher rates of attainment than the English – and this was true for both women and men. One group, Native Indians, had extremely low university participation rates and relatively little recent progress seems to have been made by this group.

Directly comparing women and men, by ethnic group, shows that women have higher attainments than men among four groups: the French, Scandinavian, Ukrainian, and Native Indian groups. Furthermore, in every other ethnic group the gap had closed between the attainments of women and men. In contrast, therefore, to the situation with social class, it does appear to be the case that women's increased university participation has helped to lessen differences in university attainment by various ethnic groups (Anisef, Okihiro, and James, 1982).

Women now constitute the majority of students in, and graduates from, colleges and universities. Despite slow access to the system of higher education, recent spectacular gains for women have led to this new balance. Data on levels of success and performance show that women do at least as well, if not better than their male peers. For women, even more than for men, the majority of post-secondary students come from upper status backgrounds, a finding we tentatively link with the greater success of women. Evidence we present also demonstrates that women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds have entered post-secondary education, although differences across certain ethnic groups (notably Native Indians) continue.

The Gendered Division of Higher Education

To this point we have shown the extent to which women have increased their participation in post-secondary education. It is important, however, to realize that simple entrance does not insure equal access to all areas. While Grace Annie Lockhart was able to obtain a university degree by 1875, as we noted above, she would not have been able to acquire a degree in medicine because women were not allowed to compete with men for these professional degrees in the 1800s. This single example illustrates the segregation which then existed, and which as we will show, continues to exist in higher education.

As we noted in our introduction, while the admission of women to the public school system occurred early, there was nevertheless a sharp divide in the programs of study open to women and men. As Prentice (1977:112) attests, this segregation went beyond course content:

> Common school architecture and pedagogy as well as Education Office advice throughout the period [late 1800s] insisted on separate entrances, separate playgrounds, separate seating and even separate recitations for boys and girls....

Our concern in this section of the paper is to examine the current extent of separation in higher education.

Fields of Study

Table 5 shows the fields of study for women and men graduating from university. The most noticeable feature of the Table is the gendered division of education wherein women are concentrated into certain fields, most significantly household sciences and nursing, and conspicuously absent from others, most particularly engineering and applied science. As in the occupational world with its gendered division of labour, so it is within the university with a gendered division of education.

Table 5

Degree Attainment by Sex, Field of Study, and Year
(Bachelor and First Professional Degrees)

	1970-71			1984-85		
Field of Study	Total Degrees N	Degrees to Women N	%	Total Degrees N	Degrees to Women N	%
Arts	19,393	7,802	40.2	24,444	13,858	56.7
Commerce	3,444	215	6.2	11,985	4,579	38.2
Education	15,406	8,129	52.8	15,323	10,779	70.3
Applied Arts	1,165	639	54.8	2,886	1,883	65.2
Law	1,958	183	9.3	3,086	1,285	41.6
Biological Science	1,837	517	28.1	3,034	1,445	47.6
Physical Sciences	3,870	751	19.4	6,582	1,784	27.1
Agriculture	502	61	12.2	782	336	43.0
Engineering	4,426	51	1.2	8,078	869	10.7
Dentistry	369	16	4.3	487	113	23.2
Medicine	1,432	211	14.7	2,129	804	37.8
Health Occupations	280	221	78.9	992	844	85.1
Nursing	1,258	1,221	97.0	1,746	1,693	97.0
Pharmacy	441	169	38.3	654	409	62.5
Household Science	629	625	99.4	793	762	96.1
Veterinary Medicine	132	11	8.3	247	129	52.2
Social Work	319	175	54.9	1,418	1,144	80.7
Non Classified	10,090	4,453	44.1	8,150	4,755	58.3
Total	66,951	25,450	38.0	92,816	47,471	51.1

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Educational Statistics for the Seventies*, Cat. # 81-569.
Statistics Canada, *Education in Canada*, Cat. # 81-229.

While modest changes have occurred over time in both the labour market and in higher education, a highly segregated structure continues to prevail. Fully 6,056 of the 22,021 additional degrees acquired by women between 1970-71 and 1984-85 have been in Arts (27.5% of the increase), another 4,364 in Commerce (19.8% of the total) and 1,102 in Law (5%). In short, expansion in three non-traditional areas accounts for over 50% of the growth in degrees for women.

It is important to stress this pattern, that the greater acquisition of university degrees by women in the last fifteen years has not come about because women have simply expanded their enrollment in traditional areas of female study. This can be seen by examining the areas where, in 1970-71, women received greater than 50% of the degrees granted. The traditional female fields of study – education, applied arts, health and nursing, household science, and social work – account for only 30% of the growth to 1984-85 (while in 1970-71, these areas accounted for 43% of all women's degrees).

An alternative way to examine change in this gendered division of education is to recognize women's and men's participation in expanding versus contracting fields of study. While no field of study has a declining or stagnating student cohort, some fields (e.g., Arts and Education) are attracting relatively fewer students compared to other areas (e.g., Science). The majority of women are concentrated in the former, whereas men dominate in the faster growing areas.

While greater opportunities for women have occurred in some areas, other fields have become even more concentrated by gender. Education, social work, and health occupation fields have become even more gender segregated over the last fifteen years. In short, while some movement toward diversification has occurred, some retrenchment of a concentrated gendered division of education has also resulted.

The data in Table 6 show patterns of segregation in the fields of study found in community colleges. Although as we have noted earlier, women have received the majority of college certificates and diplomas for the last ten years, a gendered division of education occurs here as well. Once again those areas that are the fastest growing are occupied mainly by men, with women finding themselves concentrated in fields where growth is either slow or non-existent.

The changes detected in our tables, with respect to the gendered division of education, come from an analysis using rather coarse categories. While some diversity is apparent from our analysis, finer categories would show that within our broad classifications, segregation continues. Take, for example, university Arts faculties, where women continue to dominate in English and sociology, while men outnumber women in Economics and Political Science. If anything, our coarse categories understate the degree of segregation by sex in fields of study at both community colleges and universities.

Significant and persistent differences occur in the fields of study that women and men pursue in higher education, although over time there has been some decline in the overall level of segregation. This changing pattern is, however, a combination of events wherein some specialties remain segregated (e.g., transportation studies), others are becoming even more concentrated (e.g., education), and still others are moving toward a more uniform gender balance (e.g., law).

Table 6
Diploma Attainment by Sex, Field of Study, and Year
(College Diplomas)

	1975-76			1982-83		
	Total Diplomas	Diplomas to Women		Total Diplomas	Diplomas to Women	
Field of Study	N	N	%	N	N	%
Arts	3,106	1,338	43.1	5,034	3,152	62.6
Business	8,684	5,182	59.7	13,927	9,590	68.9
Education	55,096	4,148	74.1	7,490	5,462	72.9
Engineering	2,119	179	8.5	8,685	1,931	22.2
Medical	11,742	10,847	92.4	9,802	8,645	88.2
Natural Resources	2,018	382	18.9	6,676	984	14.7
Technologies	2,553	226	8.9	3,821	362	9.5
Transportation	253	5	2.0	324	9	2.8
Other/Misc.	393	123	31.3	239	134	56.1
No Report	561	222	39.6	104	52	50.0
Total	38,334	23,082	60.2	56,102	30,321	54.1

Note: Field of study as designated by Statistics Canada.

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Enrolment in Community Colleges*, Cat. # 81-222.

We should also stress that this gendered division of education is not restricted to higher education, but has its roots in earlier educational and socialization experiences (Gaskell, 1985). In addition, we should note that the segregated roles women and men occupy in education extend into the labour market where women and men pursue different jobs.

The University Labour Force

To illustrate this sex-typing of occupational tasks and the different opportunities for advancement women and men experience in the labour market, we use the university faculty as a case study. This case study serves as one example of the potential changes that may occur in professional occupations as more and more women gain the necessary training. The case of women in the university faculty is also instructive because of the impact that post-secondary schooling has in influencing and teaching a new generation. Finally, since higher education both shapes and reflects larger social trends, the position of women in higher education is an important signal to students about the current situation of women in society, and especially in professional employment.

Although women constitute the majority of university undergraduates and over one-quarter of Ph.D. degrees are now granted to women, fewer than one in five university faculty members are female. As Table 7 reveals, between 1970-71 and 1984-85, the percentage of women faculty members increased only 4%, from 13% to 17%. By way of comparison, in the last decade and a half the proportion of women attaining undergraduate and first professional degrees grew from 38% to 51%. While the university student body is now an almost even balance of women and men, at the current pace the faculty will not have this balance until about the year 2100 (assuming the current rate of increase continues – a growth of 4% every 15 years).

Table 7

Number of Full-time University Teachers by Rank, Sex, and Year

	Rank									
	Full Professor		Associate Professor		Assistant Professor		Lecturer		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
1970-71	166	4,677	522	5,948	1,241	7,736	888	2,181	3,140	21,472
	(3%)	(97%)	(8%)	(92%)	(14%)	(86%)	(29%)	(71%)	(13%)	(87%)
1975-76	302	7,013	1,017	9,130	1,694	7,390	707	1,552	4,317	26,467
	(4%)	(96%)	(10%)	(90%)	(19%)	(81%)	(31%)	(69%)	(14%)	86%)
1980-81	476	9,328	1,600	10,950	1,773	5,594	668	1,029	5,169	28,130
	(5%)	(95%)	(13%)	(87%)	(24%)	(75%)	(39%)	(61%)	(16%)	(84%)
1984-85	682	11,309	1,973	11,221	1,895	4,918	703	766	5,831	29,094
	(6%)	(94%)	(15%)	(85%)	(28%)	(72%)	(48%)	(52%)	(17%)	(83%)

Note: An ambiguous "other" category has been dropped from the original table.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Teachers in Universities*, Cat. # 81-241, 1984-85, p. 19.

The community college situation is somewhat more balanced, although here too men dominate. In 1983-84, 8,891 of the 24,100 community college faculty were women (36.9%). The growth of the community college sector opened up jobs for women, but it will take some time at this level as well for the faculty to match the balance now existing between female and male students.

It is not simply the balance of women and men as instructors that is important but also the array of job opportunities open to both sexes. The details of Table 6 demonstrate that not only do few women find work in the university labour market, but those who do get university jobs find themselves concentrated at the lower levels of the profession. Put most sharply, in 1984-85 only 1 in every 50 faculty members was a female full professor as compared to 1 out of every 3 male faculty members being full professor. Paralleling the general labour force, women occupied the least secure teaching positions in the university system. Women's concentration in these marginal positions means they carry a disproportionate share of the teaching load, because it is people in junior positions who have the heaviest course schedules. This results in women having fewer hours to devote to research activities upon which academic prestige is based.

To add insult to injury, not only were women concentrated in the lowest echelons of the faculty hierarchy, they made less money than their male colleagues at every faculty rank (see Table 8). Those few women who had achieved full professor status received over $3,000 less than their male peers in 1984-85. At the level of lecturer, where more women were concentrated, the salary gap was $2,998, still in favour of men. Among university professors of all levels, women earned 83% of what men did, a modest improvement from 80% in 1980-81. Whether or not this gap will continue to close is open to speculation, since during the full course of the 1970s the gap in university salaries between women and men actually widened (Boyd, 1979).

Table 8

Median Salaries of Full-time University Teachers
by Rank and Sex 1984-85.

	Sex		
Rank	Women	Men	Difference
Full Professor	$56,054	$59,109	- $3,045
Associate Professor	$43,898	$45,515	- $1,617
Assistant Professor	$33,548	$34,977	- $1,429
Lecturer	$28,032	$31,021	- $2,989
Total	$41,512	$49,945	- $8,433

Notes: Only faculty with Ph.Ds are included.
Quebec data is unavailable.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Teachers in Universities*, Cat. # 81-241, 1984-85, pp. 56-57.

Beyond this concentration of women in the lowest ranks of the faculty, women instructors are also over-represented in certain teaching fields. Education, Nursing, English, Languages, and Fine Arts are particular fields where women are found, with Engineering, Physics, Mathematics, and Physiology being areas in which there are very few women faculty members. In senior administrative positions, few women occupy positions of deans and presidents.

As either students or faculty, women are concentrated into particular fields of study. Few women have followed Lockhart's early lead in science. The expansion of opportunities for post-secondary entrance and graduation have been important, but the continuing sex differences in educational training help to reproduce the gender segregation of the labour force. The pattern of employment in the university teaching fields reflects the differential opportunities open to women and men.

Explanations and Discussion

The recent expansion of the post-secondary system has been fueled by a series of social changes. Three of the more influential explanations offered to account for growth in college and university education are: i) population growth, ii) the pursuit of a "just society," and iii) economic change. In this section we will briefly explore how each of these can or cannot be used to explain women's changing participation in higher education.

The Baby Boom

One factor undoubtedly influencing the most recent expansion of education has been the baby boom of the 1950s and early 1960s (see Clark, Devereaux, and Zsigmond, 1979). More children were born in Canada in 1959 than in any year before or after. As the cohort of baby boomers progressed through the school system, their massive numbers required more schoolroom seats and more teachers.

This demographic explanation falls well short of accounting for women's overwhelming contribution to the recent expansion of higher education. The baby boom generation is composed of an almost equal number of women and men, but as we saw above (Table 1), recent enrollments in higher education increased substantially more for women than for men. Between 1971 and 1984, the 18-24 year old age cohort of women and men increased by 24% and 21% respectively. For men, the absolute size of the age cohort grew more than did either their full-time or part-time university enrollment (which rose by only 19.5% and 1.8% respectively over the same period). For women, enrollment growth was more than triple the size of the numerical increase in the 18-24 year old cohort (enrollments grew by 85.8% for fulltime women students and 144.5% for part-time women students). In short, the increased numbers of men at college and university paralleled the growth in their age cohort whereas women's participation increased well beyond the size of the 18-24 year old cohort.

Equality of Opportunity

The pursuit of a fair or just society, where life chances are determined by performance and achievement rather than by social position and family status, is a second force often offered as a reason for educational expansion. As we noted in our introduction, this idea of equality in and through education was important to the Status of Women commission of the late 1960s. Politicians too, led by Trudeau and his desire for a "just society," were behind the push to expand opportunities to pursue post-secondary education.

With increasing calls for equality of opportunity, it became increasingly difficult to maintain higher education as an exclusive haven for the children of privilege. Opening the system to accommodate more people required an expansion of schooling to insure that all qualified and capable aspirants who wished a spot could find a place. The evidence we cited above shows that greater accessibility did not occur for everyone and, while the gap in attendance between ethnic groups has narrowed, students at college, and even more so at university, still come predominantly from upper status backgrounds.

Furthermore, although more women have entered the post-secondary sphere, they are not equally represented in all areas. Moving from undergraduate student, through graduate school, to the university faculty, men are found in greater and greater proportions. The gendered division of education also persists, with women and men following specialized roles.

Economic Changes

Rising levels of unemployment, increasing international competition, continuing technological change, and the growing power of corporate conglomerates have combined to alter the current labour force in which college and university graduates compete for jobs. One prevalent reaction to this tighter labour market has been an escalation in the "paper chase" as more and more young people choose to pursue the academic credentials demanded by employers (see Collins, 1979). As the pursuit of educational qualifications intensifies, the demand for access to colleges and universities rises.

With more and more women entering the labour force, competition for jobs has intensified. Especially because of the segregated division of labour, women often compete with other women for jobs. Any increase in competitive pressures is, however, as likely to have occurred for men as for women. Evidence which might suggest that employers require higher educational credentials for women than men, or that women see educational qualifications as more important than men, is not available. In fact, the most recent survey of college and university graduates suggests that a better fit exists between educational qualifications and specific job activities.

In economics, human capital theory is a prominent explanatory model. A key premise of this approach is that individual investment decisions are thought to reflect peoples' beliefs about economic benefits (e.g., Foot and Pervin, 1983;

Vanderkamp, 1984). In weighing the costs (e.g., tuition fees, forgone earnings) and the benefits (e.g., occupational attainment, future salaries), people are presumed to calculate whether college or university education is worthwhile. For example, when the economy is buoyant and employment prospects are therefore substantial, education may be less attractive because good jobs are plentiful. Conversely, when the economy turns and youth unemployment rises, the post-secondary sector acts as a warehouse where people go to escape the insecurity of the labour market while expanding and improving their skills.

The human capital approach appears to offer little explanation for the growth of women's participation in higher education. Neither Vanderkamp, nor Foot and Pervin, while attempting to explain the growth of university participation rates, have anything specific to say about women's enrollments even though, as we have shown, it is the growing number of women in the post-secondary community that has fueled the recent period of expansion.

More generally, none of the theoretical accounts that dominate the social sciences as explanations of the growth of education seems particularly sensitive to the experiences of women. In the main, all the accounts are silent on the issue of greater participation by women, a comment on the literature which reinforces Smith's (1975) contention regarding the exclusion of women's experiences from theoretical consideration.

While these theoretical accounts have been curiously silent about women's experience, other remarks about higher education have cast a shadow over the growing prevalence of women in colleges and universities. Coincident with women becoming the majority of the college and university graduating class, a very strong claim has been made that the standards of post-secondary institutions have deteriorated substantially. Over a period when women's participation has risen steeply, a growing clamour asserts that standards have plummeted (Bercuson, Bothwell, and Granatstein, 1984). In the light of claims like this, which can be interpreted to imply that women's work is less valued than men's (see Eichler, 1983), it is very important to recall that our preliminary evidence on both degree attainment and course grades suggests that women outperform men. In short, the data we have presented suggests that if there is any truth to the claim of deteriorating standards, women cannot be held responsible.

It is equally important, however, to note that at the very time that women's entry into colleges and universities is increasing, both the financial support and economic value of the post-secondary sector is being undermined. Various studies have shown the declining financial support for colleges and universities (e.g., Decore and Pannu, 1986; Guppy, 1985). Other researchers have pointed to the declining value of degrees and diplomas relative to the 1960s (e.g., Goyder, 1982). As women's participation rises, funding begins to decline and the economic value to post-secondary qualifications fall.

Conclusions

Our message has been mixed. The good news is that more women are now participating in post-secondary education. The bad news is that the gender-divided nature of higher education persists; that women remain largely confined to the lowest ranks of faculty positions and receive the lowest pay at all levels; and that as women's overall participation has grown, post-secondary funding has declined, degrees and diplomas have lost economic value, and colleges and universities have been increasingly attacked for having low standards.

Our evidence far outstrips the explanatory powers of the theories of educational expansion we reviewed. What these theories do demonstrate, sadly, is that women's experiences have been ignored by those wishing to understand and account for the recent expansion of post-secondary education. Our review of this work aptly illustrates Smith's (1975) contention that women are excluded from the theoretical edifices that social scientists, mainly men, construct in attempts to explain the social world. Even when gender differences are fundamental to the social issues at hand, the evidence shows that men devise explanations that ignore women.

As we have stressed, women's presence is also missing in the halls of academe. When more than 1 of every 2 graduates from post-secondary institutions are female, fewer than 1 in 5 of the instructors are women. Nevertheless, women students are likely to encounter women teachers in more than 1 in 5 of their courses, because for both students and teachers a sharply segmented educational division of activity persists.

A great deal has changed since Grace Annie Lockhart attained her university degree. Neither the attitudes nor the policies currently prevalent in colleges and universities deter women's participation so strongly as they did in the 1800s. Nevertheless, equality for women in higher education remains a goal that appears to be many years of struggle in the future.

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Introduction to Part Three: The Nature of Curriculum: Whose Knowledge?

In this section we come to the heart of the feminist critique of education. Feminists argue that our very conception of education, of what counts as important knowledge and good pedagogy, has a male bias. It has been designed by men for men, it treats women as "other", and it ignores women's experience.

What is taught in school classrooms? How do we determine whether it is correct and important? Who decides what belongs in school and what should be learned elsewhere? How do schools decide who learns what parts of the curriculum? Why has the curriculum changed over time and how should it change in the future? The study of curriculum involves fundamental questions about what is worth knowing and how we should teach. By and large, schools teach how to conjugate irregular verbs in French, but not in Chinese; they teach about Beowolf but not, about Harlequin romances, they teach gymnastics but not break dancing. What is taught in school is a selection from among the vast number of often contradictory things that different people "know" at any particular time. Moreover, curriculum involves the organization of knowledge in particular ways for teaching purposes.

What is taught reflects conscious and unconscious decisions by a variety of people acting in particular social and economic contexts. There has been renewed academic interest in the social and historical processes involved in creating a curriculum since some influential work in the so-called "new" sociology of education (Young, 1977; Bernstein, 1977) and in social history (Tomkins, 1986; Kliebard, 1986; Cuban, 1984). Feminist scholarship has a variety of contributions to make to this debate about what counts as important knowledge in schools and how it is shaped by social processes.

We often fail to notice the selection and organization of knowledge that is involved in arriving at a curriculum, taking for granted that multiplication will be taught in grade 4, that the politics of confederation is central to Canadian history, and that discipline boundaries will separate the teaching of history from the teaching of literature. But struggles over curriculum do erupt, and when they do the decisions involved in arriving at the curriculum become visible and debatable. When AIDS curriculum is criticized because it impinges on the role of the family, or a school board bans the the Merchant of Venice because it stirs up anti-Semitism, the politics of curriculum hits the headlines. Feminism has called into question some of our taken for granted assumptions about curriculum, put them on the political agenda and struggled to bring about change.

The feminist critique of curriculum in the late 1960's was not a new phenomenon. As historian Veronica Strong-Boag (1986) points out,

> Women have been part of a broad ranging assault on the assumptions, substances and methods of educators and educational institutions .... First and second wave feminists have had much to say specifically about the education of girls and women, and the failure to reflect female reality in the structures of teaching or scholarship. To a large degree they have believed that to control education is to control the future and the outrage of their foes would seem to suggest that they believe it as well!

One of the first attempts that organized women's groups in Canada made to change the curriculum was to incorporate home economics into the public schools. At the turn of the century, when labour and industry were arguing for the inclusion of industrial and technical subjects, many women's groups were arguing for the inclusion of home economics. As the Local Council of Women told the Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education in 1913, "The Local Council of Women would like to see service in the home lifted to the same plane as the profession of nursing. The Council does not believe the home should continue to be the only place for which special training is not regarded as necessary." They wanted women's work to be publicly recognized as worthy of study; they wanted its scientific knowledged base acknowledge. They saw that putting something in the curriculum was a way of publically acknowledging its value (Stamp, 1977; Danylewcyz et al, 1985). They accepted as natural the division between men's and women's spheres, and they wanted recognition for women's. There were a few dissenting ("equal rights") feminists who challenged the notion of separate spheres for men and women, arguing that the inclusion of home economics would channel women away from industrial and technical studies and confirm their position in the domestic sphere (Powers, 1984). But when home economics was eventually introduced, it was seen as a victory for women. Today, on the other hand, home economics often gets criticized as a "ghetto" for women, echoing the concerns of earlier dissenters.

The debate about home economics illustrates some of the different strands of thought that contribute to a feminist debate around curriculum. There are those who would have women move into the existing curriculum in a more equal fashion – taking more science and more industrial arts, while boys would be encouraged to enroll in home economics. There are those who would add to the curriculum the concerns of women, from home economics to women's studies, on the assumption that these concerns are different from men's, in either the short or the long run. There are those who would replace the existing curriculum with studies that more evenly represent the concerns of both men and women. To continue the home economics example, this would mean replacing both home economics and industrial arts with a course that provides a new amalgam of both under the rubric of something like life skills.

The feminist critique has no single voice. Some feminists want to add women's concerns on to an existing curriculum; others want to reshape the entire curriculum. Some believe there is a distinctive women's way of discovering and knowing the world; others want to incorporate women's voice into a new and more complete knowledge. Some focus on the content of what is taught; others focus on how it is taught, arguing that the medium is the message. Some women are frustrated and angry at the recalcitrance of those who refuse to respond to women's concerns about curriculum; others are excited and optimistic about the potential for renewing and revitalizing education which the discovery of women's voices brings. In all cases, feminists critically examine what counts as education and want it changed.

Equal Representation in the Curriculum

The argument that women should be more equally represented in different subject areas was taken up in section two. As a critique of curriculum, it suggests eliminating sexism in classrooms so that women feel welcome in all areas of the school. It entails the development of bridging programs and remedial classes to allow women access to new areas. It means changing classroom interaction to eliminate discrimination against female students. It's demands are limited to equal opportunity within the existing structures. However, trying to make the curriculum more hospitable to women, more "girl friendly" as Whyte et al (1985) puts it often involves an extensive critique of curriculum, administration and pedagogy.

To make schools "girl friendly" involves representing female experience in the curriculum. The most straightforward index of women's omission from the curriculum is a count of various indices – the number of female characters in elementary school readers, the number of female authors on the reading list, the number of women mentioned in a history text, the number of women in tenured university positions who are responsible for creating scholarship. The omission of, or as Tillie Olsen (1978) so eloquently phrases it, the silences of women are clear.

But to add women means re-examining the rules that are used for inclusion in the first place. If the people mentioned in history texts are those how have played an important role in governing the country, clearly women cannot be equally represented. The process of adding women in involves changing conceptions of what students should learn in history and why they should study history in the first place. it means learning about the ways ordinary people lived their lives so children can understand the history of people like themselves. It means including more social history, more studies of how families were organized and work was distributed in other historical periods. It means understanding the ways gender has shaped the organization of Canadian society.

The omission of women is not just a question of oversight. Our very conception of education, of what is worth knowing, and of the disciplines is challenged by the process of including women.

Revaluing The Female

In an oft quoted address to a group of female college graduates in 1977, the poet Adriennce Rich said, "What you can learn here (and I mean not only here but at any college or in any university) is how men have perceived and organized their experience, their history, their ideas about social relationships, good and evil, sickness and health, etc. When you read or hear about 'great issues', 'major texts', 'the mainstream of western thought'; you are hearing about what men, above all white men, in their male subjectivity, have decided is important". p. 232 O'Brien (1981) has felicitously dubbed this curriculum the "malestream".

To add what women think is important into the curriculum can mean a variety of changes. It can mean adding home economics, parenting education, or assertiveness training. But most often it means adding feminist perspectives, in what has come to be called "women studies".

Women's studies curricula are curricula that focus on what women want to know, that focus on the developing knowledge from, as Smith (1974) puts it "the standpoint of women". This is something that is very distinctive about feminism as a place to begin from politically – that we begin with ourselves, with our sense of what we are, our own experience (Smith, 1977 p. 13).

Many recent books point out how knowledge must change when women's experiences are addressed (Dubois et al 1985; Langland and Gove, 1981; Keohane et al. 1982; Spender, 1981; Sherman and Beck, 1979; Finn and Miles, 1982). Examples could be taken from a variety of areas, but perhaps in re-examining our conceptions of science, feminist criticism makes the most radical break with male epistemology. Feminist thought joins recent work in the history and philosophy of science in calling attention to the way scientific knowledge has been shaped by its particular social and political context, and particularly its practice by men. Keller (1982, 1985) has argued that women tend to do science, and talk about it in different ways from men. In her biography of Barbara McClintock, who won the Nobel prize for corn genetics, she contrasts McClintock's "feeling for the organism", her "conversations" with nature, with male conceptions of science as domination and imposition. She argues that these ways of doing science have been denigrated by the scientific establishment, but that they must be revalued, reexamined and recognized as an intrinsic part of the scientific process.

Gilligan (1982) makes similar arguments in relation to moral reasoning. She argues that women do it differently, and that women's ways of working through moral problems have not been recognized in moral philosophy and moral education. Individualized arguments about justice, which underpin our legal system and our tests of moral reasoning, ignore the kind of contextualized reasoning and concern for community and commitment, termed "the ethic of care" by Gilligan. This ethic, she argues, women are more likely to articulate.

In other disciplines there are many examples of how feminist scholarship challenges such basic assumptions as the relation of public and private (Elshtain, 1981), the ways to read a text (Silverman, 1985), and the nature of the economy (Cohen, 1982). In all cases, the argument is that if one starts from the standpoint of women, things appear in a different light. The questions one asks are different; the ways one goes about looking for answers are different.

It is not only the content of curriculum that concerns feminists. "We know that to bring women fully into the curriculum means nothing less than to reorganize all knowledge and that changing what we teach means changing how we teach" (Culley and Portuges, 1985). Feminists have charged that the organization of educational institutions and the ways knowledges is transmitted to students have a male bias and that this is because institutions have failed to incorporate the ways women prefer to organize and learn.

The notion of a distinctive feminist pedagogy arises from the experience of consciousness raising in the women's movement in the late 1960's. Consciousness raising involved small, leaderless groups of women coming together to share their life experience and to use it to discover what was common among them and how women's oppression was organized. It was a mode of learning that was enormously powerful and politically influential. The method has been compared to Freire's (1970) "conscientization", a mode of literacy training for peasants that combined political action and the active reconstruction of knowledge by learners.

"Feminist pedagogy" is based in a questioning of traditional authority relations between teacher and student, and a distrust of bureaucracy (Bowles and Klein, 1983; Tancred-Sheriff, 1987). It eschews the separation of the public classroom from private experience, and does not recognize any clear distinction between emotion and reason. It is quite opposed then, to traditional academic structures.

This wide ranging critique makes the process of putting women into the curriculum a difficult, indeed revolutionary task. It is relatively straightforward to add to the history books the suffragettes and the Native women who organized the fur trade, to add to the literature curriculum a few novels written by women and to add to the arts syllabus some women artists. It is quite another thing to change the way we approach historical, literary and artistic study. While it may be possible to formulate plans to stop discrimination against female students and encourage interaction between teachers and female students, it is difficult to do away with bureaucracy, hierarchy and competition in educational institutions.

A New Synthesis: Integrating Women's Studies

The desire of feminists to transform curriculum and pedagogy has led to a debate about whether scholarship should be a separate discipline or should be integrated into the mainstream disciplines (Bowles & Klein, 1983; Strong-Boag, 1983; Boxer, 1982). Those who want to keep women's studies as a separate course, department or field argue that cooperative, contextual and interdisciplinary feminist scholarship can only arise and be carried forward among a group of similarly committed scholars. They argue that the development of women's scholarship depends on a like-minded community of women who are not preoccupied with fighting against male structures. The advocates of integration, on the other hand, argue that feminist scholarship must develop alongside, enter into and transform the mainstream disciplines. They argue that women's studies becomes a ghetto that allows most students to continue in "men's studies".

Most, however, would agree that the ultimate goal is not to continue with two versions of knowledge, the male version and the female version, but to develop a new synthesis that is richer for paying attention to both male and female perspectives. To return to Keller's views on science, she concludes that, rather than rejecting science, the feminist critique can enrich our understanding of how science is accomplished, and can "bring a whole new range of sensitivities, leading to an equally new consciousness of the potentialities lying latent in the scientific process". It adds an understanding of the reflexive subject to traditional notions of objectivity. Similarly, Gilligan (1982) argues that understanding both the ethic of justice and the ethic of care will lead to "a more generative view of human life."

One of the most influential Canadian documents to address the way feminism must transform all knowledge was published in 1985 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Its authors, Eichler and Lapointe, point out that scholarship that does not take adequate account of women is simply bad scholarship.

The pamphlet gives specific examples of how male bias operates and what can be done about it. Eichler and Lapointe discuss how research has transformed statistical differences into differences (as in psychological scales of masculinity and femininity), now it has overgeneralized concepts that apply to males ("universal" suffrage was granted before women got the vote) and how it has failed to consider the way assumptions about gender affect data gathering ("Do you think women doctors are as good as men doctors?" does not allow the response that women are better doctors).

In this section there are a variety of feminist approaches to curriculum. Ruth Pierson introduces the thought of three well known feminist writers, showing how education was central to their critique of existing society as well as to their visions for change. Mary Astell (1666-1731) argued that education gave men a false sense of superiority over women, but that it could be used to promote autonomy for women. A century later Mary Wollstonecroft advocated not just equal, but identical education for girls and boys, at least those of the middle class, in order to transform gender relations and strengthen democracy. At the beginning of the 20th century, Virginia Woolf wanted an education for women that was different from the hierarchical and militaristic education that men received. She argued, like some radical feminists today, that education should be reoriented in a way that would transform the traditional disciplines, and promote peace, along with personal contextualized learning.

Nancy Sheehan takes us to the Canadian women's movement in the early 19th century and again shows how central education was to women's politics. She explores the way a variety of women's groups lobbied for an education that would represent during this period, women's concerns – temperance, citizenship, health, nationalism and practical education. Schooling has always been a women's issue, she point out, and women have had a substantial impact on what the schools look like today.

Because it has had an important influence on feminist scholarship in Canada, Dorothy Smith's essay on ideological structures argues that women have been excluded from the production of the forms of thought which describe and explains experience. It is men's perspectives and interests which are represented in the dominant ideology and in curriculum, despite the fact that women as teachers in the lower grades are responsible for transmitting this ideology to children. Her analysis of the roots of this dominance, and of its maintenance have had a major impact on the way feminists understand the curriculum.

Alison Dewar provides a case study of one physical education program, illustrating how messages about women's inferiority are transmitted by faculty and received by students as a "biological fact of life". She emphasizes the complexity of this process, showing the alternative messages about gender which may be available in the curriculum, and the ways students have to make their own sense out of what they are told. She rejects a static model of the reproduction of gender and uses a model that makes visible the active production by both students and instructors of meanings about gender.

Thelma McCormack examines women's studies, and argues that it is a discourse which must be protected by the university's commitment to academic freedom. She argues that male scholars in male dominated universities have dismissed feminist scholarship, and that women's studies programs have a precarious place in the academy. The defense of these programs can be found in a modern understanding of civil liberties, the right to construct and follow one's own agenda, to control this agenda and to determine the standards of performance relevant to it.

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8

Two Marys and a Virginia: Historical Moments in the Development of a Feminist Perspective on Education

Ruth Roach Pierson

If we are to begin speaking about a feminist pedagogy, as indeed we should, then it behooves us to think historically and to recover earlier pronouncements by women on the issue of women's education. My concern in this paper is with the historic emergence of a feminist perspective and what feminists, from that perspective, have written of relevance to pedagogical theory.

One identifiable characteristic of feminism across an entire spectrum of varieties has been the pursuit of autonomy for women. Integral to this feminist pursuit of independent personhood is the critical awareness of a sex/gender system that relegates power and authority to men and dependence and subordination to women. Feminists start from an insistence on the importance of women and women's experience, but a woman-centred perspective alone does not constitute feminism. Before a woman-centred perspective becomes a feminist perspective, it has to have been politicized by the experience of women in pursuit of self-determination coming into conflict with a sex/gender system of male dominance. From a feminist perspective the sex/gender system appears to be a fundamental organizing principle of society and for that reason it becomes a primary object of analysis (Harding, 1983).[2]

Feminists have realized that the perpetuation of a male-dominant sex/gender system has facilitated, and been facilitated by, male control of the production and dissemination of knowledge. And hence feminist critiques of the sex/gender system of their day have necessarily involved educational demands. Beginning with the demand for access to formal education and to what counted in their day as knowledge, over time these demands have grown more radical. I should like to suggest that this radicalization can be understood only in terms of the changing historical context. I cannot here systematically demonstrate the development of this shift over time, for that would require charting the advances and retreats of feminism's uneven course over the past three hundred years or so in relation to changes in the political economy and dominant ideology of gender relations. But what I will attempt to show, by looking at what I believe are three moments in the history of this development, is that the increasing radicalization of the feminist critique of education is related to an increasing awareness of the fundamentally gendered nature of society and an increasingly severe critique of the implications of that gendering for human society in its entirety. The three moments I have chosen are the life and work of Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Virginia Woolf.

The sex/gender system of 17th-century England which granted only to men the privilege of formal education was the object of commentary and criticism by some women of the upper social strata. Writing at the turn of the century, Mary Astell (1666 or 1668-1731) challenged this male monopoly on education for fostering in men a false sense of superiority and for preventing in women the attainment of inner autonomy. In two tracts, written for women about women's condition by a "Lover of her Sex," Astell subjected to scrutiny and biting satire the sex/gender system of her day as it affected the daughters and wives of gentlemen. Her *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest* (Part I of which was published in 1694, Part II in 1697) outlined a scheme for remedying gentlewomen's lack of education. Her *Some Reflections upon Marriage, Occasion'd by the Duke and Duchess of Mazarine's Case* (1700) gave a scathing analysis of the implications for upper-class women of the institution of marriage as constituted at that time in conjunction with women's deficient education.

Mary Astell's father was a Newcastle-on-Tyne coal merchant; her mother came from wealthy Catholic gentry. After her parents died, Astell moved to Chelsea and there, electing to remain single, acquired a reputation for learning and became the centre of a circle of women with scholarly interests. Just how she acquired her learning is not known, though tradition has it that she got her start from a curate uncle (Perry, 1986:37-46). Well read as she was, she still lamented her "ignorance" of "the Sacred Languages," Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and her knowledge of French "seems to have been a late acquisition" (Smith, 1916:6-7). "Patronized" by the daughter of an Earl with Court connections, and in correspondence with learned clerics, Astell still knew what it was like to be ridiculed as a "philosophical lady," that stock figure of comedy in late 17th and 18th century drama. It is with some asperity that she compared the rewards which boys received for their learning – "Title, Authority, Power and Riches" – with the "Laughter and Ridicule, that never-failing Scare-crow" which "is set up to drive [girls] from the Tree of Knowledge" *(Some Reflections*:122). Nonetheless, she experienced the pursuit of Truth as personally liberating (Kinnaird, 1983:32-33) and wanted to pass on this potential for self-development to other women of her class.

Conservative in her belief in the divine right of kings and in the necessity of a hierarchical social order for a well-governed society, she was radical in her proposals for educational change. Astell started from the conviction, radical for her day, that women were equal to men in innate rationality and spiritual capacity. At the same time she accepted as valid for far too many of her contemporary gentlewomen the charge of frivolity and excessive attention to physical appearance, apologizing to the ladies she addressed for "the seeming rudeness of [her] Proposal, which goes upon a supposition that there's something amiss in you" (*A Serious Proposal*:4). But she identified as the cause of women's incapacity culture, not Nature or God, and placed the blame firmly on men who denied women "the benefits of an ingenuous and liberal Education" (*A Serious Proposal*:6). "For Sense is a Portion that God Himself has been pleased to distribute to both Sexes with an impartial Hand, [while] Learning is what Men have engross'd to themselves," Astell wrote, adding sarcastically, "and one can't but admire their great Improvements" (*Some Reflections*:111). That women were then faulted for lacking the very learning they were denied Astell exposed as a victim-blaming double bind put on women by men:

> Women are from their very Infancy debar'd those Advantages with the want of which they are afterwards reproached and nursed up in those Vices which will hereafter be upbraided to them. So Partial are Men as to expect Brick when they afford no straw. . . .(*A Serious Proposal*:6)

Astell's proposed remedy was an institution of higher learning for the daughters and wives of gentlemen, a seminary more "*Academical* and *Monastic*," where, removed for a time from the distractions of the world, but without taking lasting vows, women could learn to cultivate their minds and discipline their wills. In the all-female environment, freed from the need to compete for male approval, women would have the opportunity to enter into "a noble, Vertuous and Disinterest'd Friendship" with other women, thus experiencing "a Type and Antepast of Heav'n." The discipline would be compassionate, not severe – " by friendly Admonitions, not magisterial Reproofs" (*A Serious Proposal*:157, 16, 24) – and under it women would be taught Cartesian logic and the submission of passion to reason. In this way, attending to their rational faculties and eternal souls, women could develop to their full human potential. The inner autonomy thus acquired would act, upon the woman's re-entry into the world, both as a buffer against and as a refuge from the less easily altered external structures of male hegemony. Combining a Cartesian emphasis on the importance of self-understanding with a Protestant insistence on informed faith over blind obedience to religious authority, Astell sought the spiritual and intellectual independence of women as an end in itself.

This woman-centred emphasis on female autonomy radically distinguished Astell's proposal from that of her male contemporary Daniel Defoe. In his 1697 *Essay Upon Projects* he suggested founding a grammar school for girls, partly in order to parry the charge that men debarred women from education out of fear of female competition, but primarily so that men could "'take women for companions and educate them to be fit for it'" (Smith, 1916:72). If historian Lawrence Stone is right that the ideal of companionate marriage was coming into vogue in this period (Stone, 1979:217-18, 234-41), then Defoe's was a male-oriented version of the sort anathema to Astell. In *A Serious Proposal* she poured scorn on the notion that women were made only to please and serve men (158). And in *Some Reflections upon Marriage* she treated with heavy sarcasm those men who, appearing "more generous than the rest of their

Sex," "condescend to dictate to [a woman], and impart some of their Prerogative, Books and Learning" so "she should intirely depend on their Choice, and walk with the Crutches they are pleas'd to lend her" (68). Astell had contempt for the Pygmalion type of relationship in which the mind of the female disciple is moulded by the superior knowledge of the magnanimous male mentor. The education that Astell desired for women was above all for the purpose of allowing a woman to become the mistress of her own rational soul.

It was also for the purpose of providing gentlewomen with an alternative to "an unhappy or dishonerable marriage" (Smith, 1916:55). Astell was scathing in her criticism of the arbitrary dominion exercised by the male domestic tyrant, extending to the government of families Locke's arguments against royal absolutism. Is it not biased of men, she asked, to "practise that Arbitrary Dominion in their Families, which they abhor and exclaim against in the State?" (*Some Reflections*:107). Astell, however, recognized the sanctity of marriage, regarding it as the institution that raised human procreation above the level of animal mating and hence "as the only Honourable way of continuing our Race" (*Some Reflections*:15). One goal of Astell's proposed college was to prepare women who were or would become mothers properly to fulfill their duty as educators of the young, a responsibility which fell to mothers, she tartly observed, because fathers "will not be confin'd to such laborious work" (*A Serious Proposal*:129). Nonetheless, Astell argued that it was not incumbent on all women to marry, as is clear from this trenchant passage:

> . . . a Woman has no mighty Obligations to the Man who makes Love to her; she has no Reason to be fond of being a Wife, or to reckon it a Piece of Preferment when she is taken to be a Man's Upper-Servant. . . . (*Some Reflections*:88)

In an age when arranged and mercenary marriages were still common within the gentry, Astell's stance was radical in asserting women's right to remain single. The abolition of convents with the Protestant Reformation's dissolution of the monasteries had left marriage as the only honourable goal of a women's life. Astell's proposed seminary for ladies would have restored an alternative for some gentlewomen, giving them the opportunity for lifetime employment as teachers.

While it was particularly the institutions of education and marriage which drew Astell's fire, on occasion her satire took aim at the whole system of male privilege and power and its pervasiveness. Just listen to this passage mocking men's argument that women are by nature inferior, men superior:

> . . . Men are possessed of all Places of Power, Trust and Profit, they make Laws and exercise the Magistracy, not only the sharpest Sword, but even all the Swords and Blunderbusses are theirs, which by the strongest Logick in the World, gives them the best Titel to every Thing they please to claim as their Prerogative: Who shall contend with them? Immemorial Prescription is on their Side in these Parts of the World, antient Tradition and modern

> Usage! Our Fathers, have all along, both taught and practised Superiority over the weaker Sex, and consequently Women are by Nature inferior to Men, as was to be demonstrated. An Argument which must be acknowledged unanswerable; for, as well as I love my Sex, I will not pretend a Reply to *such* Demonstration. (*Some Reflections*: 123-24

Here Astell revealed the relevance of the sex/gender system to the claim: women are by nature inferior, men superior. Man supported that claim, Astell pointed out, by reference to the superior power position they held in the sex/gender system while ignoring the implications of that position for the validity of the proposition they were asserting. They indeed had the power both to legislate by fiat, and to enforce the claim that men are superior by nature. But that, Astell argued, was no demonstration of their natural superiority, only further evidence of their social dominance. Might, in Astell's book, did not make truth, nor did possessing it *demonstrate* superiority. Faithful to the established Church of England and at the same time a student of philosophic rationalism, she regarded true inferiority and superiority as a question of the development of the rational soul.

Writing a hundred years after Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft raised many of the same issues, but addressed them from a different angle and for a different audience. Petit bourgeois in background, Wollstonecraft's father squandered a small inheritance on drink and the elusive ambition of becoming a gentleman-farmer. Her mother was the victim of the father's drinking, wife-beating and financial mismanagement. Her older brother, the beneficiary of male preferment, received the education and training to prepare him for a career in the legal profession; while, on her own from the age of eighteen, with little formal schooling, Mary had to scramble to make a living, as seamstress, lady's companion, governess, mistress of a girls' school, and finally writer. Still it was Mary and not her brother who nursed their dying mother and assumed responsibility for the younger siblings.[3] And yet the sex/gender system of her day categorized strength of body and mind, fortitude, and self-reliance as "manly virtues," not to be striven for by women, a division of traits which Wollstonecraft would come to rail against as unjust and unhealthy for individual women as well as for the polity.

London's radical intelligentsia of the 1780s, which drew inspiration from the dissenting tradition of English non-conformism and the French Enlightenment, became the intellectual milieu of Mary Wollstonecraft. Their principles became her principles: opposition to "the evils of autocratic government, hereditary privilege, and unearned wealth," and belief in "the natural right of every individual to political and social self-determination," "the perfectibility of human nature and human institutions," "and – above all else – *égalité* as the foundation for a new morality within human relations" (Taylor, 1983:2). It was in terms of this anti-aristocratic, egalitarian vision that Mary Wollstonecraft subjected to critical analysis the "male aristocracy" of her day (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*:141).

The ladies for whom Astell had written Wollstonecraft dismissed, with classic anti-aristocratic feeling, as irredeemably vitiated by artificial refinement and extravagance. Instead she chose to "pay particular attention" to the more "natural" women "in the middle class." But the women of this class were in a period of transition. Once the hard-working and necessary if subordinate partners in family-based businesses, with the rise of industrial capitalism, and the expansion of commercial and manufacturing enterprises into large-scale firms and factories run by men, the wives and daughters of merchants and manufacturers were being reduced to ornaments, their idle decorativeness the symbol of a man's affluence. This development Wollstonecraft viewed with consternation: the turning of bourgeois women, above all by "a false system of education," (*A Vindication*:33, 31) into the same vain, weak, affected and frivolous creatures which bourgeois radical men despised in the aristocracy.

Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published in January 1792 at the height of British Jacobin support of the French Revolution. In the name of the "natural and imprescriptible rights of man" and the citizens to "liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression" (Lefebvre, 1960:147-8) the French Revolution had abolished feudal privilege and begun the transfer of sovereignty from king to the people, defined as adult males. While Wollstonecraft had an inchoate conception of property-based class distinctions as inimical to equality, the item in the revolutionairies' program on which she focussed her main criticism was the exclusion of "one half of the human race" "by the other from all participation of government." In her reconstituted civil society, women too would be active citizens, the equals of men. They would enjoy the freedom of choice and the opportunity to become "affectionate wives and rational mothers" or, if "of a superior cast," physicians, students of politics, shop keepers, or farm managers, "supported by their own energy." What prevented the realization of this egalitarian vision was, in Wollstonecraft's view, the exercise of a male sexual imperium. "I will venture to assert," Wollstonecraft wrote, "that all the causes of female weakness, as well as depravity . . . branch out of one grand cause – want of chastity in men." The dominion of the "male sensualist" was instituted through "a false system of education" designed by "men who, considering females rather as women than human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than" companionate wives, good mothers, and equal citizens (*A Vindication*:25, 32, 220, 223, 208, 31).

The chief proponent of the theory that the ultimate aim of female education was to render women pleasing to men was Jean Jacques Rousseau, the guiding spirit of the French Revolution. That the great Rousseau, the advocate of natural reason, natural virtue, and the natural equality of man could have subscribed to such a theory was so disturbing to Wollstonecraft that she devoted a large part of *A Vindication* to refuting the premises of his misogynist pedagogy as developed in *Emile*.

For Rousseau human nature was sexually differentiated, indeed sharply divided into male and female "halves," to which he assigned radically different, and, Wollstonecraft argued, highly unequal sets of mental and physical capacities and characteristics. To the male went abstract reason, to the female practical reason; strength and aggressiveness belonged to the male; weakness and passivity to the female; males were courageous and curious; females retiring and timid. On the basis of these differences, which Rousseau believed to be demonstrably natural, he erected two fundamentally different educational systems, one for Emile, and the other for his wife-to-be, Sophie. Where space and freedom were recommended for Emile, restraint and confinement were prescribed for Sophie. While Emile was to arrive at the truths of religion by exercise of his reason in observation of nature, Sophie was to imbibe her religious faith in blind obedience first to her parents and then to her husband. And while Emile was to learn self-reliance and mastery of the world, Sophie was to cultivate the art of pleasing others. In Rousseau's scheme, the man and woman, thus appropriately educated according to their differing male and female natures, constituted the complementary halves of human nature which, when joined in marriage, would form the whole "moral person" (*A Vindication*:140).

It was "the order of nature" that, in this complementarity, the husband be the master, the wife the obedient slave. At the same time Rousseau paradoxically asserted that the slave was really as much in control as her lord and master. The balancing mechanism lay in her sexual attractiveness which enabled her to exercise indirect power. Although theoretically a natural aptitude, Rousseau called for the deliberate schooling of the little girl in the arts of cunning and coquetry so that as a woman she could exercise dominion through alternating sexual enticement with playing hard to get. The difference in education thus allegedly promoted women's power. "'Educate women like men,'" Wollstonecraft quoted Rousseau as saying, "'and the more they resemble our sex the less power will they have over us.'" Wollstonecraft wanted nothing to do with such indirect power: it was degrading to women, short-lived and unreliable. What she sought for women was self-determination. "This is the very point I aim at," she wrote, "I do not wish [women] to have power over men; but over themselves" (*A Vindication*:144, 107).

In the name of the equality of which Rousseau was ostensibly the apostle, Wollstonecraft dismissed with contempt the indirect dominion over men which Rousseau would grant women as sexual creatures. And in the spirit of the republican virtues of simplicity and sincerity, the virtues of Rousseau's natural man, Wollstonecraft rejected with abhorrence the dissimulation which Rousseau counselled women to practice. She was not taken in by the claim to equality in difference of Rousseau's complementarity scheme, recognizing it instead as a rationale for treating women "as a kind of subordinate being, and not as a part of the human species" (*A Vindication*:32). Those historians of educational theory who for years ignored Book V of Rousseau's *Emile* and assumed the lessons of Books I-IV could be generalized into a universal pedagogy, would not have made that mistake had they read Wollstonecraft

(Martin, 1981:358).

She started from a premise diametrically opposed to Rousseau's regarding human nature. For her it was not sexually differentiated, but one and the same in both women and men and its distinguishing feature was rationality. Hence male and female intellectuality were potentially identical in kind, if girls and boys were given the same education. And since reason, defined as "the simple power of improvement" and of "discovering truth," was the fount of both knowledge and virtue (*A Vindication*:94) then truth and virtue could not be one thing for a man, another thing for a woman. The existing genderic differentiation of qualities was the result of an educational system in the service of male sexual hegemony which kept women from exercising either their minds or their bodies. While Wollstonecraft granted men a degree of physical superiority, she held that the differential had been greatly compounded through girls and young women having been educated to sacrifice their natural bodily strength to delicacy, a false ideal of beauty dictated by male sensuality. If left to run free, a young girl "soon grows a romp" (Wollstonecraft, 1787:19). Similarly, the so-called feminine virtues resulted from the stunting of girls' growth and the hobbling of women's minds. Since in Wollstonecraft's view there could be no true virtue without the exercise of reason, she regarded "patience, docility, good humor and flexibility," the "cardinal virtues" of the female sex, as "negative virtues," the product of exclusion from "any vigorous exertion of intellect." Nor, since "Liberty is the mother of virtue," could virtue be compatible with abject dependence or blind obedience. The gentleness which male educators enjoined on women was no virtue at all but only "a spaniel-like affection" born of dependent submission, a "smiling under the lash at which it dare not snarl" (*A Vindication*:101, 68). Gentleness exercised from a position of independence and power was an entirely different matter.

Meanwhile men appropriated to themselves the hard virtues of courage, strong-mindedness, and perseverance, as well as the right to ill temper and bad moods. If a woman were "melancholy," she was accused of being "masculine," which was, Wollstonecraft discerned, to make of that word a "bugbear" to frighten women away from that which men wanted for themselves. Underlying such differentiation was a sex/gender system according to which men were persons in their own right, women, relative creatures, tolerated only insofar as they were agreeable to men. Woman in this scheme of things, Wollstonecraft scoffed, "was created to be the toy of man, his rattle, and it must jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused" (*A Vindication*:72, 68, 36, 72).

Wollstonecraft "earnestly" wished "to see the distinction of sex confounded in society." To abolish gender distinctions, she advocated a system of national education that would provide girls and boys with not just an equal but the identical education. On egalitarian grounds she was opposed to exclusive private schools accessible only to "the sons of our gentry and wealthy commoners." On pro-family grounds she objected to boarding schools and, on what we would call homophobic grounds, to the same-sex nature of boarding schools. She favoured government-established co-educational day schools open to all children aged five to nine, regardless of class. For the older children she desired the continuation of co-education, but at the post-nine level there would be, in keeping with her middle-class perspective, a separating off of those "intended for" working class employment. These girls and boys would continue to be educated together in the mornings, but in the afternoons the girls would receive instruction in such things as "plain work, mantua-making, millinary," and the boys in mechanical trades. While sex/gender distinctions were thus to be introduced into vocational training, in the schools for those of superior academic abilities, not only would girls and boys continue to be educated together, but they would be taught exactly the same subjects: "the dead and living languages, the elements of science," "the study of history and politics," and "polite literature" (*A Vindication*: 100, 242, 251). Development of the understanding was to be the goal, not rote memorization of unintelligible facts and figures; and physical exercise in the open air would be encouraged equally for girls as well as boys.

The woman's right which Wollstonecraft sought to vindicate first and foremost was the right to education, not to Sophie's education, nor yet to Emile's, but to an education based on the assumption of the sexual and intellectual equality of girls and boys, women and men. This right to education was fundamental to all the other rights of social and political self-determination. Wollstonecraft believed that neither education nor the use of reason was politically neutral. She knew full well that men had been and were still employing reason "to justify prejudices" and to shore up their sexual dominion. But she also believed that, within a reformed educational system, the development of women's physical strength and independent reasoning powers would have a positive effect on men as well as women, for, in her view, "The two sexes mutually corrupt and improve each other" (*A Vindication*:40, 210). Through the education of women to independence, the tyranny of male libertinism would be undermined.

In Wollstonecraft's book, duties were the obverse of rights, and while women's "first duty [was] to themselves as rational creatures," their second duty in order of importance was as citizens, which for the majority of women meant service as mothers. In this way Wollstonecraft challenged another aspect of the sex/gender assumptions pervading the theories of Rousseau and the policies of the French Revolutionaries: at the same time as his *Social Contract* and their constitutions excluded women from political adulthood, they presupposed a pre-political substratum of society in which the maternal activities of reproducing and sustaining human life are carried out. Wollstonecraft's conception of the political realm, in contrast, embraced both hearth and marketplace, home and parliament. In the polity as envisioned from her women's point of view, mothers would exercise the rights of active citizenship equally with male soldiers, cabinet makers, peasant farmers, and lawyers. Besides exposing the asymmetry of Rousseau's sex-differentiated theory of education, Wollstonecraft also argued the harm to the "social compact" of women's unequal access to education and exclusion from citizenship (*A Vindication*:218, 258). Whereas Astell promoted female education so that women could attain an autonomy of mind and soul, Wollstonecraft went further and demanded women's right to education so that women could throw off male sexual tyranny and become equal and autonomous citizens.

A third moment in the radicalization of feminist educational demands can be seen in the work of Virginia Woolf. Going to her from Wollstonecraft represents quite a leap, for they stand at opposite ends of the vast social transformation subsumed under the term "the Victorian Age." While Wollstonecraft could answer her rhetorical question "Why are girls to be told that they resemble angels" with the derisive retort "but to sink them below women" (*A Vindication*:151), Woolf felt compelled, in the manner of Luther combating the devil, to fling her inkpot at the "Angel in the House" in an attempt to kill her, so powerfully crippling had that ideal of femininity grown in the interim ("Professions for Women").

At the time of Wollstonecraft's death in 1797, a severely repressive counter-revolutionary reaction was underway in England which for decades silenced and scattered exponents of feminism as well as of democratic radicalism. Within the middle class, the gap between the public sphere defined as male and the private sphere defined as female widened. As the competitiveness of the marketplace intensified, it became convenient for bourgeois men to fashion "home" as "a haven from the heartless world" and to relegate to women and domesticity the Christian virtues which might fetter the pursuit of profit. By the time Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, most of what we now identify as the Victorian ideology of femininity was already in place: the cult of true womanhood with its ideal of the passionless and delicate lady, and the cult of domesticity with its ideal of the utterly unselfish and pure Angel in the House. The idealization of maternal nurturance and compassion in the cult of motherhood also developed throughout the century in pace with the elaboration and intensification of motherhood as a vocation.

Meanwhile within the labouring masses, rapidly increasing urbanization and capitalist industrialization had temporarily loosened forms of family organization. And with the re-emergence of labour militancy in the 1820s, a feminist voice was also raised again, at least by a radical minority of Owenite socialists, calling for female self-determination, education for women, and marital equality (Taylor, 1983).

By mid-century, however, the "line of sexual apartheid" was hardening within the working class as well, starting with "the most 'respectable' strata" (Taylor, 1983:264). In direct contradiction to the hopes of Mary Wollstonecraft, the private reproductive sphere declined in importance as an arena of struggle for equality as capitalism became entrenched and the power and productivity of the public sphere grew. Invoking the new principle of the "family wage" understood as the earnings of a male labourer sufficient to support himself, his dependent wife and children, an elite of male workers secured the primacy of the male breadwinner, at the cost of disadvantaging women in the labour market and enforcing female dependence and subordination in marriage (Land, 1980; Barrett and McIntosh, 1980). Thus, the ideology of "Women's Sphere" came to pervade Victorian society from top to bottom.

And thus the organized women's movement, which emerged among middle-class women in Britain in the second half of the 19th century, both stemmed from and struggled against the greater polarization of the sexes and deeper entrenchment of partriarchal power than had faced Wollstonecraft more than half a century earlier. One of the major goals of that many-faceted movement was educational, to improve the secondary education of girls and to gain access for young women to higher education. Insofar as the achievement of these objectives had occurred by Woolf's time, it was, as recent historians have been demonstrating, no clear-cut victory for women's equality and self-determination. The educational campaigns would not have succeeded at all, Carol Dyhouse has argued, had they "set out to challenge the conventions of family life, or even, to any substantial extent, to challenge conventions about acceptable 'womanly' behaviour or concepts of 'femininity'" (Dyhouse, 1981:57). Whether an "uncompromising" campaigner like Emily Davies of Girton College, Cambridge, who "insisted that girls should study the same subjects as men, and sit the same examinations," or a "separatist" like Anne Jemima Clough of Newnham who was willing to settle for different standards, female educational reformers were united in their concern to uphold ladylike standards and to avoid being stigmatized as "unfeminine" (Dyhouse, 1981:59-68; Delamont, 1978). Nor would these reforms have succeeded, given women's political powerlessness and lack of control over economic resources, without male support. That came, Joyce Sanders Pedersen has argued, from those well-to-do business and professional men who, with aspirations towards "gentility" but limited time, were willing to delegate guardianship of the nation's culture to their women (Pedersen, 1979). Limited as these concessions to women were, they were nowhere more fiercely opposed than at the peak of the educational pyramid, those bastions of male power and privilege, Cambridge and Oxford.

Virginia Woolf, née Stephen, was born into a large upper-middle-class household of that Victorian society in 1882. Her father, Sir Leslie, a writer and the founding editor of the Dictionary of National Biography, was the epitome of the Janus-faced Victorian patriarch: towards the outside world a gentleman and scholar but within the family given to rages. Her mother, Julia Duckworth, was the epitome of the charming Angel of the House who always put the thoughts and wishes of others ahead of her own, the Angel whom Woolf felt she had to kill before she could become a writer. Virginia knew at first hand of the privileges extended to the sons of educated men and of the self-sacrifices expected of the daughters. She also experienced brotherly power in its malign, sexually abusing form, at the hands of her step-brothers George and Gerald, as well as in its benign form, in her relationship with the Stephen brothers, Thoby and Adrian. The details of her role in Bloomsbury, marriage to Leonard, and alleged madness are too well known for me to go into here.

If, within the private world of her girlhood, she had felt "clipped and cabined" (*Three Guineas*:170), she viewed the public world of her adult years as marked by violence and destruction. She witnessed the carnage of the First World War, the coming to power first of Fascism in Italy and then of Nazism in Germany, the Civil War in Spain, and the outbreak of World War II. She also witnessed the battles of Westminster, of Oxford and Cambridge, of Whitehall, and of York and Canterbury: that is, the fierce resistance mounted by British men to women's suffrage, by undergraduates and dons to granting women university degrees, by male civil servants, after the passage of the Sex Disqualification (removal) Act of 1919, to opening up the Civil Service to women, and by the Archbishops' Commission of 1936 to the admission of women to the Anglican priesthood. The tyranny of powerful men behind these battles filled Woolf with rage. But as she believed anger was inimical to art, she did not allow herself to express it in her novels except in "insinuations" "so serpentine" that their political nature was largely missed until the second wave of feminism (Carroll, 1978:101). Woolf, however, also wrote two openly polemical tracts, *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938). In these she gave expression to that indignation which she sought to avoid in her novels. Still restrained in *A Room of One's Own*, it rises in a spiraling crescendo in *Three Guineas*, as argument circles back on argument, and repeating themes gain resonance with each reintroduction.

Both books are written from a woman-centred perspective, assuming a self-consciously female subject as legitimate knower. The first person narrator is identified either as a thinly disguised Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own*, or as Woolf herself, in *Three Guineas*. This narrator takes up an abstract question, the relation of women to fiction, or the relation of women to the prevention of war, from the vantage point of her own life, her own experience, her own struggle, her own place in society. Woolf begins each essay by locating the speaker in a specific situation and set of experiences. *A Room of One's Own* opens with the narrator sitting on the bank of the river of Oxbridge when, in the grip of an idea, she sets out across a strip of lawn only to be flagged down by a horrified Beadle who returns her to the gravel path, explaining that only the male Fellows and Scholars of the college are allowed on the turf. Her idea gone, she decides to visit the famous library of the venerable and well-endowed college, only to be denied entrance by "a deprecating, silvery, kindly gentleman, who regretted in a low voice as he waved me back that ladies are only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction" (*A Room*:9). Later that same day she is given the opportunity of comparing the sumptuous partridge luncheon served her at the college of a male friend with the plain beef and prunes and custard dinner presented her at the women's college of a female friend.

Three Guineas opens with Woolf herself finally taking up her pen to answer a letter she has puzzled over for more than three years from the treasurer of an anti-war society. He has asked her not only to become a member of and make a donation to his society, but also to give her opinion on how to prevent war. She asks him to consider the irony of his request, given how differently they stand in relation to education. He is obviously an educated man, probably a successful lawyer, while she is "the daughter of an educated man," who, like many of her sisters, received little "paid-for" education, despite the pre-war improvements in girls' secondary schooling and the founding of women's colleges. The symbol of this difference was "Arthur's Education Fund," that "voracious receptacle" to which the daughters of educated men contributed for centuries by being kept at home and stinting themselves so that their brothers could be sent to the best schools followed by university and the "Grand Tour." Commenting on the profound effect "Arthur's Education Fund" had on one's point of view, Woolf wrote:

> So magically does it change the landscape that the noble courts and quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge often appear to educated men's daughters like petticoats with holes in them, cold legs of mutton, and the boat train starting for abroad while the guard slams the door in their faces.

That difference, Woolf tells the treasurer of the peace society, created "a gulf so deeply cut between us that for three years and more I have been sitting on my side of it wondering whether it is any use to try to speak across it" *(Three Guineas*:4-5).

It is from this perspective that Woolf asks her readers to look out at the external world, and, from it, one sees a very different pattern from that presented in the dominant culture. Take, for example, the politics of dress. From the vantage point of a female outsider crossing the bridge over the river Thames, Woolf gives a glimpse of the men of the City of London: the men of St. Paul's, the Bank of England, the Mansion House, the Law Courts, and, just beyond, Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. "Your clothes," she addresses the treasurer of the anti-war society, "make us gape with astonishment." And there follows the brilliant passage in which Woolf describes "the clothes worn by the educated man in his public capacity."

> Now you dress in violet; a jewelled crucifix swings on your breast; now your shoulders are covered with lace; now furred with ermine; now slung with many linked chains set with precious stones. Now you wear wigs on your heads; rows of graduated curls descend to your necks. Now your hats are boat-shaped, or cocked; now they mount in cones of black fur; now they are made of brass and scuttle-shaped; now plumes of red, now of blue hair surmount them. Sometimes gowns cover your legs; sometimes gaiters. Tabards embroidered with lions and unicorns swing from your shoulders; metal objects cut in star shapes or in circles glitter and twinkle upon your breasts. Ribbons of all colours – blue, purple, crimson – cross from shoulder to

shoulder . . . the splendour of your public attire is dazzling.

Meanwhile, one of these men, Woolf points out in a footnote, a Judge, while himself attired in "a scarlet robe, an ermine cape, and a vast wig of artificial curls," has recently asserted that "Dress, after all, is one of the chief methods of women's self-expression" and that "in matters of dress women often remain children to the end." That this member of the "dominant sex" was unaware of the double standard he was applying in matters of dress and thus blind to the absurdities and ostentation of his own dress Woolf could only explain as "owing largely it must be supposed to the hypnotic power of dominance" (*Three Guineas*:19, 150).

Society appeared to Woolf, the female outsider, as fundamentally structured in terms of dominance and subordination (Weir, 1983), and its members as hypnotically caught up in the dance "round and round the mulberry tree, the sacred tree, of property." Animating society throughout were competition and the struggle for success, monetary gain, and power. As it was men who ultimately held the power, whether as admirals or archbishops, industrial magnates or newspaper moguls, professors or prime ministers, brothers or fathers, Woolf named the society patriarchal, that is, male dominant. And that male dominance was backed up by, and embedded in, all the institutions of society, be they public or private. Truly, Woolf wrote, "Society . . . was a father" (*Three Guineas*:74, 135).

The counterpart of male dominance was, of course, female subordination; they were caught, Woolf saw, in a reciprocal relationship. Similarly, she argued, the male-defined public sphere and the female-defined private sphere, no matter how sharply separated spatially or normatively, were nonetheless "inseparably connected; . . . the tyrannies and servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other." Both spheres were, in Woolf's view, vitiated by the relations of dominance and subordination. Woolf's stinging indictment of the "public world, the professional system, with its possessiveness, its jealousy, its pugnacity, its greed" was matched in severity only by her indictment of "the private house with its cruelty, its poverty, its hypocrisy, its immorality, its inanity" (*Three Guineas*:142, 74, 39). Men's dominance in the private sphere depended on women's exclusion from or restricted access to the public sphere as much as men's dominance in the public sphere rested on the relegation of women to domestic labour in the private sphere.

Many had observed, Woolf noted, the effect on women of the sexual division of labour which assigned to men the domain of the world at large and to women "the care of the household and the family." Few, however, had studied "the intellectual and spiritual effect of this division" on men. Woolf herself was convinced that society owed "to this segregation" "the astonishing complexities of theology; the vast deposit of notes at the bottom of Greek, Latin and even English texts"; in truth "all those meaningless but highly ingenious turnings and twistings into which the intellect ties itself when rid of 'the cares of the household and the family." Finally, she even believed that society owed to the sexual division of labour "the immense elaboration of modern instruments and methods of war." Both the Fascist dictator Mussolini and the Nazi dictator Hitler insisted on the division, Woolf observed, as did also the Anglican priests and the top-ranking civil servants in Britain as well as all those male heads of household who, claiming man's right to a family wage, piously asserted their "desire to support wife and children." The emphasis which men placed upon the necessity for separate male and female spheres "is enough," Woolf concluded, "to prove that it is essential to their domination" (*Three Guineas*:180, 181, 138, 181).

Writing in 1938 in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, when Europe stood poised on the brink of the bloodiest war the world has ever known, Woolf sounded a dire warning as to the importance of seeing that connection. For she perceived that the men off "in the immensity of their public abstractions" and the women immured "in the intensity of their private emotions" were locked in a pathological symbiosis. Not only did Woolf perceive society as fundamentally structured in terms of dominance and subordination; she also perceived the dominance and subordination as fundamentally gendered. Institutionalized in a sexual division of labour, the unequal power relations were also internalized by men and women as "sex characteristic," if not instinctual. Man's conception of himself as "manly" was tied up with his ability to dominate, his willingness to fight to establish or maintain dominion; woman's conception of herself as "womanly" was tied up with her ability to serve men, to gain male approval. If the characteristic "manhood emotion" was susceptibility to the taunt of cowardice, that is, of being unable or lacking the nerve to fight, the characteristic "womanhood emotion" was susceptibility to the charge of unchastity, that is, of appearing as damaged goods in men's eyes, of failing to meet male approval (*Three Guineas*:142, 133, 182).

The patriarchal sex/gender system bred in man a will to power and the belief "that he has the right, whether given by God, Nature, sex or race is immaterial, to dictate to other human beings how they shall live; what they shall do." That was for Woolf the germ, the "egg," of "the whole iniquity of dictatorship, whether in Oxford or Cambridge, in Whitehall or Downing Street, against Jews or against women, in England, or in Germany, in Italy or in Spain." In its extreme form, it was a disease, this compulsion to dominate, this need to feel superior, "for whose gratification a subject race or sex is essential." Woolf labeled it with the psychologists' term "infantile fixation" (*Three Guineas*:53, 103, 167, 126-27). When challenged, it was capable of arousing in men powerful emotions of hostility and anger, in the face of which women, gripped with fear, fell silent. Its most alarming contemporary manifestation was the Fascist and Nazi assertion of "unmitigated masculinity" (*A Room*:98), the identification of man with warrior. Both Hitler and Mussolini "repeatedly" insisted that it was "the essence of manhood to fight," "the nature of womanhood to heal the wounds of the fighter" (*Three Guineas*:186). If in the eyes of Woolf's contemporary Orwell the picture of future evil was "a boot stamping on a human face – forever" (Orwell, 1950:203), Woolf reminded her readers that the gender of the person wearing that boot would be masculine. For Woolf, "the picture of evil" was the man in uniform claiming to be "Man himself, the quintessense of virility" (*Three Guineas*:142-43). That man posed the threat of war.

Thus Woolf's analysis of the sex/gender system of her day revealed a connection between the petty domestic tyrant and dictatorship, between patriarchy and fascism, between male dominance and war. Prevention of war would require, then, the dismantling of the whole patriarchal sex/gender system: the desegregation of male and female spheres, the depolarization of masculinity and femininity. Men would have to emancipate themselves from the notion that war was a necessary proving ground of "manly qualities;" women would have to cease "concealing and excusing the disease of infantile fixation" in their men (*Three Guineas*:8, 134). And if, as Woolf wrote in *A Room of One's Own*, "mirrors are essential to all violent and heroic action," then women would have to stop serving, as they had been for centuries, "as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (*A Room*:36, 35).

But in order to withdraw that mirror from the brother eager to go to war and maintain toward him instead "an attitude of complete indifference," women needed economic independence. And that meant the daughters of educated men needed an education of their own. Not, however, of a sort identical in method and content with that received by their brothers and fathers, for that old education had obviously bred elitism, jealously, combativeness, and greed. Instead, Woolf envisioned an experimental women's college where "there would be none of the barriers of wealth and ceremony," and where "Not the arts of dominating other people; not the arts of ruling, killing, of acquiring land and capital," but "the arts of human intercourse; the art of understanding other people's lives and minds" would be taught. For ultimately Woolf saw that even after subordination and dominance were degendered, the competitiveness which breeds war would survive unless dominance and subordination were abolished altogether. "But this," Woolf acknowledged, "is to anticipate" (*Three Guineas*:107, 34, 185).

Woolf, then, like her acknowledged foremothers Astell and Wollstonecraft, also insisted on women's right to education. She saw that access to formal education was necessary to women's economic independence which was in turn a necessary precondition of women's independence of mind. But Woolf was much more skeptical than either of her predecessors of the benefit to women of access to what counted as education in her day. At the highest levels, to which her female contemporaries were "admitted so restrictedly," education did not protect intellectual liberty and disinterested culture; instead it fostered the hierarchical and militaristic values of a competitive and deeply gendered society. Furthermore, the centuries-long male control of the generation and preservation of knowledge confronted women with language structures, categories of analysis, and criteria of what was worth knowing so androcentric as to severely handicap women's capacity for self-understanding and communication. Woolf herself, for example, felt constrained to coin the clumsy term "the daughters of educated men" because, as she explained in a footnote, "our ideology is still so inveterately anthropocentric" that the term "bourgeois," which may fit the brother or father of an educated man's daughter, "is grossly incorrect to use of [her] who differs so profoundly in the two prime characteristics of the bourgeoisie – capital and environment" (*Three Guineas*:87, 146).

"No age can ever have been as stridently sex-conscious as our own," Woolf wrote in 1929, referring to the strident assertion of male superiority by the professors, "or patriarchs, as it might be more accurate to call them," angered by the movement of women claiming equality (*A Room*:94, 34, 96). In 1938 Woolf perceived the culture of her day as so phallocentric, the education so masculinized, that in her view "Science . . . was not sexless; she is a man, a father, and infected" with the disease of "infantile fixation" (*Three Guineas*:139). Entire disciplines were contaminated by the elitist and male-dominant orientation. Take history, for example. While the lives of those deemed to have been great men warranted endless biographies, little or nothing was known about the "infinitely obscure lives" of ordinary women. And so, to the "Brilliant student at Newnham or Girton" Woolf pleaded: rather than "the hundred and fiftieth life of Napoleon" write instead the history on "the girl behind the counter" or of the "very ancient lady crossing the street on the arm of a middle-aged woman, her daughter, perhaps, . . ." (*A Room*:85, 44, 86, 85). In other words, Woolf was suggesting, in order to break the dominance of the male voice in history women needed to establish new criteria of historical significance. In a piece on Aphra Behn, she provided us with an example of her own. "If I were rewriting history," she confided, "I should describe more fully and think of greater importance than the Crusades or the Wars of the Roses:" – "a change" which "came about" "towards the end of the eighteenth century": "The middle-class woman began to write" ("Aphra Behn":91).

The most radical dimension of Woolf's critique of patriarchal society was to posit a connection between men's capacity to absorb themselves in "the immense elaboration of modern instruments and methods of war" and the sexual division of labour which freed men from, while confining women to, the realm of necessity comprised in "the care of the household and the family" (*Three Guineas*:181). Similarly Woolf's most radical critique of education was to assert the validity of her personal, contextualized voice against the impersonal and abstract voice of academe. For that reason in conclusion I think it not inappropriate for me to say a few words in my personal voice.

As an historian formally trained in an overwhelmingly androcentric tradition, I was able to go through undergraduate and graduate school without learning much of anything about women's past and without having read a single word by a feminist. My education was seriously impoverished as a result. and ever since I have been working to make up for all those years of neglect. I think

I could have benefited as a woman, an educator, an historian, and a feminist if I had been able to read Astell, Wollstonecraft, and Woolf, to say nothing of Catharine Macaulay, Frances Wright, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Olive Schreiner, Emma Goldman, Alexandra Kollontai, and many others, when I was a student. I would like other students to be spared that feeling of having been deprived and therefore urge that we work to introduce in our high schools, colleges and universities courses in the history of feminism and feminist pedagogy so that it will be easier for women in the future to practice the "Thinking Back through Our Mothers" (Marcus, 1981) that Woolf advocated.

Notes

[1] An earlier version of this paper appeared in *Resources for Feminist Research/documentation sur la recherche feministe* 13, 1 (March/Mars 1984): 1-9.

[2] In Harding's article, she makes it sound as if the visibility of the sex/gender system is a "discovery" that feminists have made only in the last decade or so.

[3] For biographies of Mary Wollstonecraft, see *inter alia*, Margaret George, *One Woman's "Situation": A Study of Mary Wollstonecraft* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), Eleanor Flexner, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Biography* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghetype Inc., 1972), and Claire Tomalin, *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974).

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9

National Issues and Curricula Issues: Women and Educational Reform, 1900-1930

Nancy M. Sheehan

In the early decades of this century Canadian women became increasingly interested in social and political matters (Bacchi, 1983; Cook and Mitchinson, 1976; Kealey, 1979; Light and Parr, 1983). Confined to the home for the most part; without the right to vote, hold public office or formally influence policy decisions; and hampered by laws and practices that discriminated against them, some educated middle class women began to form and join women's reform organizations. The goals of these organizations differed but were in areas such as social welfare and civic improvement (Kealey, 1979). Their interests were a departure from the more personal and charitable organizations to which women traditionally belonged. Women began to extend their influence beyond the home, becoming involved in societal matters at a time when social upheaval caused by rapid immigration, industrialization and urbanization was sparking a general interest in reform (Brown and Cook, 1974; Clark, 1975; Thompson, 1985).

Because of the interrelationship among reform movements and the overlapping of causes and goals among organizations and groups, it is difficult to define the limits of the women's reform movement. One goal certainly was the extension of the suffrage. Others included access to higher education, better divorce laws, and mothers' allowances. Promotion of legislation that would prohibit alcoholic beverages, improve the health of children and adults and benefit the poor and unfortunate were concerns of women and their organizations, although certainly not exclusively. What is noteworthy about these groups is that they attracted both liberal and conservative women and within any one organization both ends of the political spectrum could be accommodated (Roberts, 1979; Strong-Boag, 1977). Since schooling has always been of interest to women it is not surprising that all of these reform groups sought to achieve their goals by influencing curriculum policy and implementation in the public school system across the country.

This educational interest developed at a time when school systems were under attack. Neil Sutherland has argued that reformers wanted to make schools both more humane, more child centered, and more responsive to the way in which children grew, and at the same time more practical and more relevant,

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teaching skills needed in the workplace (Sutherland, 1976). These attempts to alter the purpose and function of the school have been given the label the New Education Movement. Proponents of "new" education viewed the school as a vehicle for integrating the child into the social structure. Compulsory education laws, child labor legislation, and physical health regulations helped to broaden the role of the school (Schnell et al., 1980; Wilson et al., 1970).

Many people saw change in education as central to societal reform. A variety of organizations and agencies, but particularly women's groups, felt that education, especially the schools, could save the society from social and moral decline. Many organizations of women had strong units or departments devoted to education, where the goal was to influence the department of education, the schools and the teachers for the purpose of educational reform. Thus, the women's reform movement and the new education movement often found themselves on the same side in reference to curriculum areas such as imperialism/Canadianization, sobriety, health and practical/technical education. Organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union [WCTU], the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire [IODE], the Women's Institutes [WI], and the United Farm Women [UFW] considered themselves educational organizations. The National Council of Women of Canada [NCWC] was an umbrella organization that linked and coordinated the many activities of its member associations and enabled them to cooperate on various issues.

This chapter examines the educational role of several voluntary women's organizations to ascertain their goals, methods, and successes or failures. It will determine how well the objectives of these various groups and the elements of the "new" education coincided. One focus of this study will be to analyze the effect of outside-the-school women's organizations upon national curriculum policy and implementation, concluding that the women were an effective lobby for change in the public schools.

I

Women's groups, clubs and societies experienced a growth in numbers, kinds and importance in the years just prior to the turn of this century and through to 1930. The majority of these, outside of church and missionary groups, were locally organized, often single purpose clubs, for the benefit of the women members. Floral and garden clubs, literary and press societies, artistic and theatrical organizations catered to the education and leisure of their members. University Alumni and women teachers' groups gave women a collective voice and strength in their fight for equal pay or access to professional schools. Political equality leagues, national and provincial political organizations, and business and professional clubs were outlets for women with these interests. There were numerous charitable organizations, not the least of which were the many church groups whose members spent time fund-raising through bazaars, teas and sales, collecting items of clothing and household goods to be shipped to the needy and carrying out the wishes of the ministers and elders of the church (Kealey, 1979; Weaver, 1915).

Women's reform organizations, first organized in the last quarter of the 19th century, were a departure from the personal, charitable and local orientation of most female societies. As a group they had a number of characteristics. First, their prime mandate was to reform society via legislative change. Second, each organization had a special thrust or orientation by which reform would be achieved. Third, these were national organizations with local, municipal and/or provincial affiliates. Fourth, the work of each society was handled at the national and local level by specific committees, departments of work or councils. Fifth, the members, for the most part, were women of Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle class background. Sixth, the leadership and/or membership of these groups tended to overlap, with women often belonging to more than one organization. And seventh, each one claimed to be an educational organization with committees or departments devoted to educational themes.[1]

The educational programs of these reform organizations had many facets, but all were based on the notion of the importance of the child for the future of society. Since the one agency that had contact with most children was the public school, each group wanted its message to become a part of the school's curriculum. Although the organizations were country wide and policy was established at the national level, the school systems in the country had no such national face. Since education in Canada was a provincial responsibility, it was incumbent upon the provincial and local units of the societies to lobby departments of education, school boards and individual teachers.

Women's Christian Temperance Union

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was founded in 1874 in the United States, "as an organization of Christian Women banded together for the protection of the home, the abolition of the liquor traffic, and the triumph of Christ's Golden Rule in custom and in law." The organization became world wide and quickly gained favor with women in Canada. The Dominion Woman's Christian Temperance Union, with headquarters in Toronto, was formed in 1885. The women believed that the major method of achieving their goals was by means of education, particularly through the public school (McGovern, 1977; Mitchinson, 1977, 1979, 1981).

The WCTU campaigned to have a compulsory course in temperance (read prohibition) in every classroom, a WCTU approved textbook and a provincial examination. The department within the organization that handled the public school lobby was known as Scientific Temperance Instruction (STI). The STI at the Dominion level set out the policy, suggested ways of implementing it, provided materials and acted as both a disseminator of information and an idea bank. If something worked well in one locality, other jurisdictions were apprised of this through meetings, the monthly magazine and letters.

To help accomplish their public school agenda, petitions were sent to provincial governments; personal interviews with Premiers and Ministers of Education were arranged; copies of approved textbooks and courses of study were sent to education officials; and members spoke at teachers' association conventions and appeared before curriculum review committees. They also enlisted other groups and individuals to help in their campaign. Organizations like the Sons of Temperance, the Temperance and Moral Reform Leagues and United Farm Women offered support. Dr. Tory, President of the University of Alberta, Mr. Alexander MacKay, superintendent of Halifax schools and Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, founder of Women's Institutes and promoter of domestic science were some of the individuals who were on the "temperance-in-school" bandwagon.

Besides becoming involved in specific curriculum change, the STI Department ran essay contests, approached teachers and school boards at the local level, distributed STI literature and donated books to local school libraries on the subjects of alcohol and tobacco. The holding of banquets to interest local teachers, the publication of prize essays to motivate students, and the organization of poster and temperance scrapbook contests to increase awareness were all used to "teach" temperance.

The *policy* promoted by the WCTU, that the public schools should have a course in temperance with textbooks and examinations, was adopted by all provincial departments of education. There were provincial differences, of course, in the form of the implementation, the length of the programs, the grade level affected, and the textbooks chosen, but these were minor variations in the *administration* of the program. The WCTU believed they had achieved their public school goals. However, analysis of teacher timetables, textbooks, essays and examinations reveal that the teaching in this subject area was haphazard, superficial and spasmodic, often occurring only when a compulsory examination was in the offing (Sheehan, 1980a, 1980b, 1984c, 1984d).

Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire

The Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire was founded in 1900 by Mrs. Margaret Polson Murray of Montreal. Her vision included organizations in all English-speaking colonies with headquarters in London. Eventually chapters were organized in all parts of Canada, in Bermuda and the Bahamas. A sister organization was formed in the United States. As the name implies, imperialism has been the keynote, the driving force behind the IODE. In the words of one member in an article in *Echoes*, the purpose of the Order was "to implant in every Canadian man, woman and child the grandeur of our heritage as a British people ... the unit of our far-flung dominions ... the ideas of liberty, justice and honour of which the Union Jack is the emblem...." To accomplish its goals the IODE became involved in many social, humanitarian and financial concerns. However, a number of IODE activities were educational in nature and the group was particularly interested in school-related matters.

Like the WCTU, the IODE had a centralized administration with overall power in the hands of the national executive and the annual meeting. Each primary order came under the umbrella of the municipal, which in turn reported to the provincial jurisdiction. A hierarchical administration evolved, with the national body able to veto plans and activities devised at the local level (Sheehan, 1984b). In 1904 the national executive formed an educational committee to advise and act on educational subjects in Canada. A representative group of educators agreed to serve: ministers of education, university presidents and professors, public school personnel and military officers. It was the first and only IODE committee that included men among its members. This inclusion had the advantage of ensuring that the educational activities of the association would have approval of the educational establishment.[2]

These activities had one goal – the inculcation in the youngsters of patriotism, which to the IODE meant imperialism. The years prior to WWI were ones in which the IODE quietly pursued its objectives using school children, school officials and the curriculum to further its imperial goals. By supporting a school linking scheme and a correspondence plan, the IODE tried to get children and adolescents from around the Empire in contact with one another; by proposing programs for Empire Day and for the last Friday of each month, by donating libraries to schools and by holding essay contests, the women hoped to increase the children's knowledge and patriotic understanding of the Empire; by appealing for regular use of the anthem, by giving Union Jacks and pictures of royalty to schools, the members believed they would keep the imperial presence in front of the children; and by supporting the school cadet movement, the order helped in preparing the youth of the country to come to Britain's aid when necessary.

After WWI the IODE began to take an interest in and promote a knowledge of Canada. The topics for essay contests shifted from imperial subjects to Canadian titles; books donated to school libraries changed from solely British titles to ones with an emphasis on Canadian history and geography; and programs for Empire Day began to include Canadian materials. In 1919 National War Memorial Scholarships were established to promote attendance at local Canadian universities. Additionally, a new strategy to make immigrants into Canadians was adopted.

The pre-war educational activities of the IODE were many, varied and patriotic. All were aimed at teaching the children about the glories of the empire, inculcating values and beliefs that helped make the empire great, and in assuring the children that the Empire was their Empire to love, honour and defend. The post-war activities were of a dual nature. The imperial aim was loudly proclaimed whenever overt actions were taken that appeared to lessen the Empire-Canada connection (e.g., the diminution of Empire Day). On a day-by-day basis, however, the IODE promoted Canadian books and materials for schools.

They did have some success. IODE Empire Day programs were sanctioned by Ontario's minister of education; essay contests were integrated into the curriculum; inspectors provided lists of schools needing libraries; and school cadet corps sought the help of the IODE. Although the IODE claimed to be a vibrant educational organization, not all the activities were treated with the same kind of enthusiasm and interest; not all the chapters engaged in much educational work; and not all the schools or departments of education responded with the same degree of commitment to the cause (Sheehan, 1984a).

Women's Institute

The Women's Institute was established as a rural, adult, education organization on the premise that if you educate a woman you educate a family and sometimes whole communities (Walker, 1984). Founded in Ontario in 1899, the first Institute was the brainchild of Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless who undertook a campaign to educate wives and mothers in nutrition and good housekeeping. To her goes credit for the push for domestic science education in schools and teachers' colleges. The first committees give us an indication of the goals of Institutes: Domestic Economy; Architecture, with special reference to heat, light, sanitation and ventilation; Health, embracing physiology, hygiene, calisthenics and medicine; Floriculture and horticulture; Music and Art, and Literature, education, sociology and legislation. Institutes spread across the country and in 1919 the Federation of Women's Institutes of Canada was formed with Emily Murphy as president. By that time, the pattern of activity for individual institutes was established and the Federation became a mechanism for communication across the country rather than a policy-making body. It acted as a clearing house for provincial activities and as an initiator of nationwide projects and campaigns. Federated News, a paper published quarterly, was one means of communicating across the country.

Another unique aspect of Women's Institutes was their incorporation under provincial departments of agriculture which offered financial and political support. Some agricultural departments appointed a provincial supervisor who oversaw the work of the Institutes, supported conferences and annual meetings and donated a per capita membership grant. Although there was no national organization for the first twenty years, the committees and activities across the country were remarkably similar probably because of organizers provided by the departments of agriculture and because of word-of-mouth communication from one district to another.

Since the home, children and school were the confines of the world for most women it is not surprising that attempts to improve the rural school would be an important task for the Institutes. Some local institutes made school improvements their main line of work. Cooking and sewing classes, hot lunches, medical inspection by qualified personnel, playground equipment and good health promotion generally were areas needing attention. These were particularly difficult in rural schools, which were one room buildings without extra space, running water or electricity. The schools were isolated from one another, and one teacher was expected to handle everything. The Institutes operated at two levels. They passed and sent on to the government numerous resolutions asking for rural school improvements. And individual institutes made arrangements to support their local schools. Some started a hot lunch program, even if it was just to supply hot cocoa. Others arranged to have one or two of their members offer sewing and cooking lessons for the girls. A few raised the funds necessary to provide playground equipment. Institutes cooperated with rural public health nurses and the junior Red Cross; members spoke at teachers' conventions and institutes; they made donations to school libraries and encouraged the women to serve as school trustees (Crowley, 1986; Dennison, 1984; Zacharias, 1980).

Although the activities across the country varied, the Institutes established a reputation among rural women everywhere as social and educational centres. Individual rural schools benefited from the activities of their local institutes but Institute success in improving rural education more generally was negligible. Such improvements were not achieved until the mid-50s and until the notion of consolidation was accepted and large school divisions became a reality.

United Farm Women

The various farm women's organizations were established as parallel groups to the all male United Farmers and Grain Growers organizations which had been formed to improve grain prices and marketing strategies for the financial benefit of the farmer. The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) from 1921-35 and of Ontario (UFO) from 1919-23 formed the respective provincial governments. The allied women's organizations, therefore, were more political than the Women's Institutes, they tended to form in communities that did not have a WI and had broader goals, such as an interest in social and economic questions.

These women's organizations had no national affiliation and no national magazine or newsletter. The structures of the United Farm Women of Alberta (UFWA) and of Ontario (UFWO) paralleled that of the senior organizations, with autonomous locals, district conventions and various committees. The Alberta women had space in *The UFA* to summarize resolutions, publish convention speeches, and produce longer, serious articles on topics of interest to rural women. As well, the pages of *The Grain Growers' Guide* had regular columns of interest to rural women and published activities of the UFWA, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Women's Section, and the Manitoba Women's group. In Ontario the *Farmer's Sun* was the main source of information for the UFWO.

Although they differed on the ways to improve education, all of the farm women's groups were concerned with the inadequacy of the rural school. The women of the UFWA actively sought curriculum change for the schools, advocating "progressive" education. Utilizing aspects of the Scandinavian Folk School Movement and the American Dalton Plan, the UFWA supported individualized instruction, teaching the whole child, making education relevant to rural life and preparing students for responsible, thoughtful citizenship. They advocated the reorganization of rural schools, medical inspection, and improved and expanded facilities (Wilson, 1975).

Depression, drought and defeat at the polls in 1935 killed the UFA and with it the UFWA. Vastly improved rural schools were not a reality during the lifetime of the women's organization but it has been argued by Wilson (1979) that their sensitivity to the needs of rural children, publication of school reform ideas and research into new methods paved the way for school reforms in the late thirties, such as the introduction of the Enterprise, a project method in the elementary grades, the reorganization of administrative units from districts to divisions and the adoption of the elective principle in the high schools. It is perhaps not a coincidence that the two provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan, which adopted progressive education principles most fully were also the two provinces with the most active and most progressive farm women's organizations. Margaret Kechnie (1985) has argued that criticism by the UFWO of the Women's Institutes in Ontario for allowing WWI to interfere with their rural reform goals, the UFWO's association with the obviously political UFO, and goals that were different from those of the older WI's led to the failure of the UFWO. The strong interest in education found in the UFWA was not present in the Ontario group. The differences in activities across the country seem to have depended upon the interests of the local leadership. This is perhaps a reflection of the lack of a national affiliation to offer direction and to coordinate and disseminate ideas.

National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC)

The National Council of Women of Canada was the umbrella organization which coordinated the activities of the many associations that made up its membership including those discussed in this chapter. In 1893, with Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Governor General, as President, the NCWC held its first meeting (Shaw, 1957). Designed to exert a feminine influence over all the operations of Canadian society, the NCWC mandate was to suggest and initiate rather than to carry out; to broaden the perspective of workers preoccupied with purely local issues; and to end the needless duplication inherent in so many women's organizations. Its struggle was to adjust to the changing role of its member organizations and to reconcile conflicting interests. Local Councils of Women coordinated the work of the local/municipal branches of affiliated members. In this way both local and national concerns of individual federations found their way into the debates of the national council. Given the educational interests of many of the associations it is not surprising to find that this activity had a high priority (Strong-Boag, 1977).

For example, NCWC resolutions in 1917 included several relating to education. Governments were reminded of the "supreme importance of the teaching profession" to the country and therefore of the necessity to support better qualified teachers. It was agreed that one role of the school was to produce "good citizens of the Dominion and of the Empire." That education had to be broad enough to care for the immigrant, the child and the adult was a third resolution. The NCWC called for education to be extended to include music, art, physical education and technical training; to provide medical inspection in schools and in improved health curriculum; and to include supervised playgrounds complete with play and sports equipment (Strong-Boag, 1975).

The umbrella nature of the NCWC resulted in resolutions that were compromises by one or more member associations whose thrust might be different on any one issue. In some ways this may have weakened the impact of the Council. However, it also meant that some associations that had not so far been aware of or interested in particular topics became advocates. In this way the specific interests of one organization were supported by other associations. The message to government, institutions and the public would appear then to have widespread support.

Each of the associations under review, except the Farm Women, had a national office with a constitution, annual meetings, a national executive and a committee structure. At the local level the national organizational structure was duplicated. Each of the groups also had a national magazine or newsletter that helped locals keep up with directions, ideas, items that were going on elsewhere. The *Canadian White Ribbon Tidings* of the WCTU, *Echoes*, the magazine of the IODE, the Women's Institutes' *Federated News* and *The UFA*, The Grain Growers' Guide and the *Farmer's Sun* had pages devoted to activities in the provinces, suggestions for practice, implementation strategies and ideas to help with recruitment and dissemination of their mandate. Through *The Messenger*, begun in 1903, *Council Topics* circa 1922, and the *News Letter* in the late twenties, the NCWC disseminated news to its members. But it also reached beyond its own members by publishing columns of Council business in the *Canadian Magazine*, *Woman's Century*, the *Daily News* of Toronto and Montreal's *World Wide* for varying lengths of time. The dissemination of educational topics was enhanced by this organizational and communications structure.

II

It would appear that women had an effect on the educational developments of the first three decades of this century. If we compare the interests of women and their organizations with public discussion of education we find a striking similarity. Although there were many issues that the women were concerned with, four stand out above the others. Sobriety, imperialism/Canadianization, health and practical/technical education were the foci of some or all of these associations of women. The WCTU was the group that took the lead in demanding temperance education. However, they received support from the Women's Institutes, the United Farm Women and, after 1921, the National Council of Women. Imperialism/Canadianization was the theme of the IODE in particular, but also of the WCTU and the National Council. Improvement in health generally and the introduction of medical inspection in schools in particular were supported by the Women's Institutes, the United Farm Women, the WCTU, and the National Council. Practical/technical education was of interest to the WIs, the UFWs and the NCWC.

These four educational issues were a part of what has been called the New Education movement – a campaign by philosophers, educators and reformers to integrate the child into the changing social structure. The reformers believed that the nineteenth century curriculum and teaching methodology that emphasized acquisition of knowledge and book learning could not cope with twentieth century social problems caused by urbanization, industrialization and immigration. From approximately 1890 on Canadian reformers attempted to change the school so that the whole child would be developed, process would be more important than product, and knowledge could be acquired from a variety of sources, not only from books. Kindergartens, manual training and domestic science courses and physical education programs were curricular aspects of the new education movement. In rural areas school gardening, nature study, agriculture and school consolidation were promoted. The broadening of the purpose of the school to include the health of children was another change. The introduction of doctors and nurses to examine school children, compulsory inoculations and vaccinations for school entrance and health programs in the school were supported by reformers within and outside the school. Canadianization was an important part of this movement. An aggressive policy of assimilation and an interest in and knowledge of Canada and the Canadian community began to grow (Stamp, 1982; Sutherland, 1976; Wilson et al., 1970).

At the turn of the century Canadian schools included content, programs and atmosphere that promoted imperialism (Berger, 1970; Lower, 1958). Spurred on by government and school officials who were convinced that Canada's future remained in her close links to the Empire, the members of the IODE (wives, daughters, sisters and mothers of prominent political, business and military figures), supplied schools and school officials with books, prizes, imperial content and program suggestions. The influx of immigrants, the Canadian success in World War I and the interest in a more practical role for the school helped a more pro-Canadian spirit. IODE support for assimilation included English-only schools, official trustees in foreign districts, oaths of allegiance for trustees, national anthem and flag saluting in classrooms and the exclusion of any conversation in a foreign tongue (Stamp, 1971, 1973). Gradually it began promoting national and community interests alongside those of an Imperial nature. It was not alone, as other organizations took up the nationalistic theme.

Another issue important in the "new" education movement was the need for health improvement. The school's role in health really began with temperance education and scientific temperance instruction. Although it was narrow in its emphasis on one aspect of health education, its acceptance by school systems in every province established that the school did have a role beyond the traditional three R's and academic content. From temperance the focus of the curriculum changed to hygiene and the inculcation of good, personal health habits. Inoculations and vaccinations to protect against communicable diseases were encouraged, the school nurse and school physician conducted medical inspections of all children, and school sanitation became a major issue. Child savers and public health reformers sided with new educators to use the school to improve the health of children and of the nation. This health campaign, begun with the WCTU's interest in prohibition, spread to groups like the Women's Institutes which had a much broader interpretation of the use of the school to inculcate good health habits and establish a healthy atmosphere (Lewis, 1983; Sutherland, 1980).

Another prominent aspect of the "new" education was an interest in practical/technical education. There was a concern that the school with its emphasis on academic knowledge denigrated manual labor; that it offered nothing to the child who was not academically inclined; and that it did not prepare the child for the reality of the labor force or for life as a homemaker. More practically oriented courses were advocated: manual training, domestic science, physical education and school gardening were examples. These courses required specially trained teachers, expensive equipment and additional physical space. They ran afoul of educational purists who thought they had no place in schools and who argued that children went to school to learn to read and write. School boards balked at the expense associated with practical education. The courses were eventually adopted by most urban boards, and on a practical, ad hoc basis in rural areas. Women's Institutes, the United Farm Women and the National Council offered the resources of their organizations in the form of people, equipment and lobbying tactics. The nature of the rural school and the attitude of rural trustees made the offering of practical/technical courses difficult, and accomplishments were not widespread until much later. But the notion that schools had a role in the development of the whole child was accepted.

Of these "new" courses Domestic Science was an important focus for all the women's groups, albeit for different reasons (Stamp, 1974, 1977). For Adelaide Hoodless, the Women's Institutes and the Farm Women, it was a way of preparing women for their roles as wives and mothers; a means of relating school and homelife; and a method of strengthening the home at a time when some thought the family was threatened by the new independence of women. To the WCTU, domestic science education was essential because it would teach about food values and nutrition, thus reinforcing the WCTU philosophy that alcohol was a poison, detrimental to the health of the individual, the family and the state. The IODE and the NCWC supported domestic science courses as a way of supplying trained household workers. They argued that well trained domestic servants would command the highest wages (Royal Commission, 1913). Underscoring these arguments was a preoccupation with providing a scientific basis to housework, elevating a career in the home to a profession requiring specific knowledge and skills. Thus, domestic science proved to be a program that united both liberal and conservative members of the women's movement. Support for domestic science courses came from those who viewed it as a means of upgrading the work and status of domestic servants; and those, like Emily Stowe, who used it as an example of the neglect of women's needs by male officials (Danylewycz et al., 1984). Despite this broad appeal the gender specific nature of domestic science ensured the continuation of conservative views about male and female roles in the family and the workplace (Crowley, 1986).

III

Support by women's organizations for curriculum reform was important and by the 1920s elements of the new education had become a part of Canadian schools, financed by provincial departments of education and operating to a greater or lesser degree in most schools. A degree of uniformity in educational systems across the country was evident. This uniformity extended to elements of the "new" education, such as sobriety, health, imperialism/nationalism and practical/technical education. The late George Tomkins (1986) wrote that, despite decentralized educational systems in Canada and the lack of even a national office of education, provincial departments of education and the curricula they adopt have been very similar. Curricula issues, like the four we have dealt with, have, in effect, been national issues – issues of concern and interest to many in the country, but especially to women.

The present paper suggests that a link can be drawn between women and national curriculum issues. Women organized to give public expression to their interests, e.g., the WCTU for temperance, the IODE for imperialism, and the WI for domestic science. These issues were not generally the concerns of male politicians, education officials and school boards. To support their goals, the women's organizations formed educational departments. The fact that they had organizational frameworks and communication devices that linked local and provincial units with national bodies meant that the lobby to each provincial department of education would carry the same message. If you add to this the role of the National Council in supporting the activities of its member associations, the lobby becomes a widespread one, not just that of a single organization. Not only was this message being carried to provincial departments of education, premiers and MLAs, it was also reaching some schools, teachers, principals and trustees through the organizations' local affiliates. In effect, women's organizations, through their educational mandate, had the effect that a national system of education might have had – policy formulation in specific curriculum areas, which varied little from coast to coast.

Differences in provincial curricula did, of course, occur. The intensity of the implementation, the length of the programs, the grade level affected, and the use of particular textbooks were noticeable differences. How to introduce practical/technical education in rural areas was one problem. Variations in interest in imperialism between Ontario and the Prairies on the one hand and, as the trend toward nationalism developed, between the Maritimes and the West on the other affected implementation. Nova Scotia had a temperance education policy both earlier and later than provinces in the West. Quebec was reluctant to get involved at all. These were variations in the administration and implementation of the program caused by local conditions. But the *policy* to have the schools involved in sobriety, health, imperialism/Canadianization and practical/technical education was Canada-wide, thanks in no small measure to reform-oriented women.

All of the groups did not achieve the same rate or amount of success in the educational arena. The WCTU, for example, constantly fought the educational system, continually frustrated by a lack of total success. Even when it appeared as though they had won, their victory was often illusory, for the measures were undermined, they believed, by inattentive and unconvinced officials. The IODE had a great deal of success initially, coming into being at a time when imperialism was at its height. Their interests were one and the same with leading government, business, military and educational figures. As that thinking began to change, the IODE found that Canadianization was an important smokescreen for imperialism. Women's Institutes and the Farm Women had less success. Tied as they were to local, rural communities, they saw their ideas on domestic science working, but working mainly in *urban* schools. Hot school lunches were left to local initiative and medical in inspection and school nurses were difficult to attain for rural areas. Some curricula change had more support than others. The influx of immigrants with different health habits, the results of medical inspection of recruits, the horrors of war and the influenza epidemic turned the attention of the century to health. The degree of success experienced by these women and their organizations depended upon how closely their goals fitted the national consensus and the national will to effect change.

The fact that all of these groups had an interest in education and that most of them had educational committees or departments of work underlines the close association of women with the home and children. It was a natural extension of their work with their own children to go beyond the home to the care, support and education of all children. If women had social responsibilities, surely children were appropriate beneficiaries. What better way to improve the society than through the training and educating of the young? And what better way than education to extend women's influence beyond the home and into the outside world without raising questions about spheres of influence? In 1897 Edith Archibald of the Halifax WCTU suggested that since "women's rights" had been so criticized women should talk more of the "rights of children"

(Forbes, 1985). This, I expect, is a clear example of the dynamics of resistance and accommodation. The women bowed to the accepted view that their world was the world of the home and family and children. At the same time they resisted this confinement by interpreting this to mean "all homes and all children," in effect broadening their world well beyond female behaviour accepted as appropriate (Anyon, 1983). The goal of improving or changing the schools was both a means to an end and an end in itself.

A further point concerns women's experience as teachers and the effect this had on their educational work in voluntary associations. Many organizational women had experience as schoolteachers. Although educational hierarchies tended to reinforce gender stereotypes with the women at the bottom of the hierarchy (Prentice, 1977), one-room schoolteaching could produce independence, self-confidence, even rebellion (Clifford, 1983). Women, like Louise McKinney of the WCTU, who were former schoolteachers, had the interest and experience to promote forcefully their reforms in the schools. Others, without this experience, might find it difficult to approach male principals, trustees and department officials, especially in urban areas, where fortress-like schools and growing bureaucracies would have been more formidable to the women than the "community" schools of the rural areas.

The tactics used by women's organizations may also have grown out of women's experience as teachers. The similarity across all the associations is striking. Essay and poster contests with prizes and public recognition at an awards ceremony or in newsletters or magazines were popular methods. Approaching local schools and teachers individually and on a regular basis was encouraged. The donation of books to school libraries on subjects such as temperance, health, the Empire, nutrition and Canadian topics occurred across the country. Each group appealed, often successfully, for support from other organizations, from churches, politicians and the public generally. The women wrote to and set up appointments with ministers of education and other department of education officials. They appeared before curriculum committees, spoke at teachers' conventions and addressed students in normal schools. They were concerned with actual curriculum materials, endorsing particular textbooks, suggesting curriculum guidelines and proposing implementation strategies. They produced literature to back up their contention that these new programs were not only necessary but also could be implemented.

This is not to suggest that all regional or local groups became involved in educational issues. Some were more interested in other institutions, like hospitals. Others had disagreements with the national department over tactics. A number of local organizations could not find a member willing to take on the educational work. When they did become involved the rural/urban dichotomy was noticeable. Members in rural areas, villages and small towns tended to approach the local school more often than those in urban areas. City groups were more likely to make representations to the provincial department of education. What also must be considered is the popularity of a particular issue in a province or region. In many instances, ideas for educational change flourished in areas where there already was some support. For example, temperance did not receive much support in Quebec and the WCTU was not strong in that province. The need for technical education was more obvious to those living in the growing cities and the involvement by the women was more likely there. In other words, women were more apt to become involved with a particular issue if there was some incipient support.

These organizations were largely made up of Anglo-Saxon, middle class, Protestant women. While this added to their political clout with politicians and school leaders, it did not ensure local support in immigrant and working class communities. The reaction of "other" women – immigrants, working class women, Catholics or Jews – to domestic science, school gardens, "hot" lunches, health habits or saluting the flag was neither asked for nor received. The input of women into school reform tended to be one-sided.

To conclude: the development of schooling was an important issue for women's organizations. It was a legitimate area for women to take an interest in and it had the potential to further their goals of reform. The impact of women's groups on education was enhanced because the leadership of these groups overlapped, support for the causes of others was asked and given and the National Council acted as a coordinating body. The Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle-class background of the women matched that of governing and educational officials, which ensured better understanding of their goals. The close association of women and children and the fact that many women had experience as schoolteachers benefited the educational activity of these groups. Women's reform organizations were important to educational change in Canada and helped to identify schooling as a women's issue.

Notes

[1] These seven characteristics apply generally to the women's groups under discussion, but not all seven apply in every case. The IODE, for example, did not advocate legislative change, the United Farm Women were not organized nationally and the National Council of Women did not have a specific reform thrust.

[2] The original committee included the Minister of Education of Ontario (Harcourt), the President of the University of Toronto (Louden), the Principal of McGill (Peterson), the Provost of Trinity (Macklem), Professors Edgar (Victoria), Long (Toronto), and Hutton (University College), Inspector Hughes of the Toronto Public Schools, Mr. H. W. Auden (Upper Canada College) and Lieutenant Colonel Pellatt (*Echoes*, June 1905, p. 14. Shortly, the Superintendents of Education of Nova Scotia (MacKay) and of British Columbia (Robinson) also agreed to be members (*Echoes*, October 1905, p. 15; *The Educational Monthly of Canada*, 28, 10, December 1905, pp. 361-62).

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10

An Analysis of Ideological Structures and How Women are Excluded: Considerations for Academic Women[1]

Dorothy E. Smith

To a large extent, men appropriate the positions that govern, administer, and manage our society. Men hold the positions from which the work of organizing the society is initiated and controlled. A distinctive feature of this social form is that the work of organizing is largely done symbolically. Things get done, or rather their doing originates and is coordinated, in words, in mathematical and other symbolic forms, on paper. It is an ideologically structured mode of action. Images, vocabularies, concepts, knowledge of and methods of knowing the world are integral to the practice of power. The work of creating the concepts and categories, and of developing the knowledge and skills which transform the actualities of the empirical into forms in which they may be governed, the work of producing the social forms of consciousness in art and literature, in news, in TV shows, plays, soap operas, etc. – this work is done by institutions which are themselves an integral part of the ruling structure. Universities, schools, broadcasting and publishing corporations, and the like are the ideological institutions of the society. They produce, distribute, and socialize in the ideological forms upon which this social organization depends.

The mode of organizing society ideologically had its origin some four or five hundred years ago in Western Europe. It is an integral aspect of the development of a capitalist mode of production. Women have been at work in its making as much as men, though their work has been of a different kind and location. But women have been largely excluded from the work of producing the forms of thought and the images and symbols in which thought is expressed and ordered. There is a circle effect. Men attend to and treat as significant only what men say. The circle of men whose writing and talk was significant to each other extends backwards in time as far as our records reach. What men were doing was relevant to men, was written by men about men for men. Men listened and listen only to what one man says to another. A tradition is formed in this discourse of the past within the present. The themes, problematics, assumptions, metaphors, and images are formed as the circle of those present draws upon the work of the past. From this circle women have been to a large extent excluded. They have been admitted to it only by special licence and as individuals, not as representatives of their sex. They can share in it only by receiving its terms and relevances and these are the terms and relevances of a discourse among men.

Throughout this period in which ideologies become of increasing importance first as a mode of thinking, legitimating, and sanctioning a social order, and then as integral in the organization of society, women have been deprived of the means to participate in creating forms of thought relevant or adequate to express their own experience or to define and raise social consciousness about their situation and concerns. They have never controlled the material or social means to the making of a tradition among themselves or to acting as equals in the ongoing discourse of intellectuals. They have had no economic status independent of men. They have not had until very recently access to the educational skills necessary to develop, sustain, and participate in it. The scope of their action has indeed over time been *progressively narrowed* to the domestic.

Women have of course had access to and used the limited and largely domestic zone of women's magazines, television programs, women's novels, poetry, soap operas, etc. But this *is* a limited zone. It follows the contours of their restricted role in the society. The universe of ideas, images, and themes – the symbolic modes which are the general currency of thought – have been either produced by men or controlled by them. Insofar as women's work has been entered into it, it has been on terms decided by men or controlled by them. In so far as women's work has been entered into it, it has been on terms decided by men and because it has been approved by men. This applies of course even to the writers of the women's movement.

In this paper I shall be concerned with some aspects of how the socially organized production and transmission of ideas and images deprive women of access to the means to reflect on, formulate, and express their experience and their situation. It is aimed at defining the distinctive role for women's studies which follows from the analysis. Much of what I shall say is not new as information. In fact what I want to do is to make observable some of the socially organized aspects of what we already know. It is a problem of tying things into a single framework which shows how they belong together. I want therefore to make use of the familiar in drawing up an account as a context within which the character and objectives of women's studies in sociology and in other academic fields might be conceived.

The Concept of Ideology

The conceptual framework used in the analysis makes the concept of ideology its key. In developing this analytic framework, I have returned to the formulation made by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* bypassing some of the very different traditions of use which are built into the contemporary practice. The meaning of the word ideology has been reduced to the notion of political beliefs.

There are two aspects of Marx and Engels' formulation of the concept, only the second of which will be used here. First, they use ideology as a key term in a methodological critique of ways of thinking of social concepts and categories (the forms of thought) as if they were autonomous powers or agents in society, independent of those who think them and of the actual practical situations in which that thought arises and to which it is relevant. Second, they are concerned with ideology as a means through which the class that rules a society orders and sanctions the social relations which support its hegemony. The concept of ideology here focuses on social forms of consciousness (the ways in which people think and talk with one another) which originate outside the actual working relations of people going about their everyday business and are imposed upon them.

Marx and Engels held that how people think about their social relations and the social order and the ways in which they define themselves and their environment in relation to the social order arise out of their actual working relations and the discourse which accompanies and expresses them. The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc. of a people (Marx and Engels, 1970:47). Originally then and perhaps in some sense "naturally" (though this term must always be used with caution) the forms of thought arise directly out of and express people's working relations, their actual situation, their experience. With the emergence of a class society, however, "mental production" becomes the privilege of a ruling class. Note here that Marx and Engels do not use the term ruling class as it has come to be used since then. It does not with them refer to a political elite. It refers rather to that class which dominates a society by virtue of its control of the means of production (1970:64). Among those means are the means of mental production.

In following their use of the concept of ideology we attend to the production of ideas by a specialized set of persons located in a ruling class. The ideas, images, etc., are produced for others to use, to analyze, to understand, and to interpret their social relations, what is happening, the world that they experience and act in. These systems of ideas are a pervasive and fundamental mode in which the organizing and control of this form of society is done. It is important to recognize that these social forms of thought originate in a practice of ruling – or management, or administration, or other forms of social control. They are located in and originate from definite positions of dominance in the society. They are not merely that neutral floating thing, the "culture."

The contrast implicit in their formulation is on the one hand between the social forms of thought – ideas, images – which are directly expressive of a world directly known and which arise where it needs to be thought and to be said and, on the other, the social forms of thought which come to us from outside, which do not arise out of experience and the need to communicate with others in working contexts. Characteristic of the latter is a way of proceeding which begins from a knowledge of the ideas and images and how to use them, and examines, interprets, assembles and formulates the world of direct experience as instances of them. We come thus to know it in terms in which it is ruled.

The forms of thought are learned. We receive them in what we read, whether books, magazines, comic-books, newspapers, or whatever; we receive them both conceptually and as images (a powerful and new ideological form in this type of society) on television and in movies; we hear them on the radio and second-hand in the ways in which the ordinary talk depends upon these media resources. The scope and intensiveness of the production of the social forms of thought is greater in this type of society than in any previously known.

The ideas and images are a pervasive and fundamental mode which serves to organize, order, and control the social relations, the working practices, the ideals and objectives, of individual members of the society. They are the forms given to people to understand what is happening to them, what other people are doing, particularly those not directly part of their lives. These are the means we are given to examine our experience, our needs and anxieties, and to find out how they can be made objective and realized (made real) as a basis for action. Ideology in our form of society provides an authorization of social reality. Perhaps more than that which can become recognized as real in the socially constructed reality is what is already interpretable in the ideological forms of thought. The practice of the ideological analysis of experience is circular, not proceeding by hypothesis, inference, and evidence, but by a process called "typification" (Schutz, 1966) which analyzes and assembles what is given in experience to find in it the type which it intends. The concept of ideology as I am developing its use here identifies a *practice* or *method* in the use of ideas and images which is ideological rather than a determinate object or type of object. I want to be able to recognize the ideological aspects of, or methods of using, the work of poets and artists and religious thinkers as well as the work of sociologists, political scientists, economists, etc. I do not, however, want to reduce the poem to its ideological use. I am not trying to suggest that everything that is produced by an intelligentsia can be reduced to this. I am holding rather that many types of literary as well as religious works have an ideological dimension and lend themselves to ideological uses. Works of many kinds may serve to order, legitimate, and organize social relations and the socially relevant aspects of experience. It is this function which is identified as ideology here. Insofar as these works are produced by that section of a ruling class known as the intelligentsia; in so far as they present as generally valid and authoritative the view and sense of the world from the specific position of its ruling class; insofar as they sanction and formulate determinate forms of social relations and serve to organize the local, particular, and directly known into the social forms of thought and discourse in which it is or can be ruled – they are ideological.

The model of manipulation from behind the scenes, the model of ideology as ideas designed to deceive and fool the innocent and ignorant put forward consciously and with malign intent by a ruling elite, is quite inadequate to analyze the phenomena we are concerned with. We are describing a class phenomenon. This means that we are locating a determinate set of positions in relation to a structure of power which constitutes a common perspective, set of relevances, conditions of experience, interests and objectives. People who occupy these positions arrogate certain powers. They have these powers because of their positions. Because of their positions they view the world in particular ways; they experience common conditions with others similarly placed. Things make sense to them in terms of projects and relevances which are not only similar but often directly related to one another. This class of positions controls the means of "mental production" as Marx and Engels describe it. Hence what is produced takes for granted the conditions of their experience, their interests and relevances. The forms of thought which are produced in this way assume the background conditions and knowledges which these positions are embedded in. They assume the moral and political values of the discourses of which they are part. They assume the dilemmas and contradictions and anxieties they give rise to. *And above all they take for granted the silences of those who do not hold these positions, who are outside.*

And as we know, those who occupy and appropriate those positions are men. Marx's and Engels' account of ideology identifies it with the ruling class. It is now clear that the class basis of ideology is articulated yet further to a sex basis. For it is men who produce for women, as well as for other members of the society, the means to think and image. In the various social apparatuses concerned with the production and distribution of ideas and images, or with the training of people to participate in and respond to these forms of thought, it is men who occupy the positions of authority, men who predominate in the production of ideas and social knowledge, and men who control what enters the discourse by occupying the positions which do the work of gatekeeping and the positions from which people and their "mental products" are evaluated.

Women's Exclusion Actively Enforced

The exclusion of women from these positions is not a function of their biology. Of course there have existed bases of exclusion in the social determinants of their role, but in this sphere there is a history of active repression. Women who have claimed the right to speak authoritatively as women have been repressed. I have made up from various sources a short list of instances.

Though we cannot assign a definite date to the emergence of ideological formations, the translation of the Bible into the vernacular languages of Europe is a good place to begin. At this point a written source which sanctified direct interpretations of moral and cosmological order became accessible to anyone who could read. The authority of the scriptures thus became anyone's authority and women were among those who could grasp it. Our first example then is from this period.

Sylvia Thrupp in *The Merchant Class of Mediaeval London* tells us of Joan Boughton and her daughter Lady Yonge: "The only evidence of heretical leanings in the city's merchant class concerns women. Sir John Yonge's mother-in-law, Joan Boughton, was burnt as a heretic in 1495, at the age of eighty, defying all the doctors in London to shake her faith in the tenets of Wycliffe, and a few years later Lady Yonge followed her to the stake. Pecock had complained of women 'which maken hem self so wise bi the Bible,' who would insist on disputing with the clergy and would admit not practice to be virtuous, 'save what thei kunnen fynde expresseli in the Bible' "(Thrupp, 1962:252).

Sheila Rowbotham gives an account of the trial and banishment of Anne Hutchison from Massachusetts in the seventeenth century: "'You have stepped out of your place,' the Calvinist church fathers in the Massachusetts Bay colony told Anne Hutchison in the mid-seventeenth century. 'You have rather been a husband than a wife, and a preacher than a hearer, and a magistrate than a subject, and so you have thought to carry all things in Church and Commonwealth as you would and have not been humbled for it'" (Rowbotham, 1973:17). Notice here a theme which we shall find again. It is not what she said that she is condemned for. It is rather that as a woman she claimed to speak as one who had authority. "They worked hard at humbling her. She had gathered round her a group of followers, mostly women. They met together and Anne Hutchison preached on texts, criticized some of the ministers, and became respected for her knowledge of scripture and of healing herbs. . . . She upset Calvinist dogma, political differentiation, and masculine superiority. She was accordingly tried by both civil and religious authority. Pregnant and ill, at one stage while she was being questioned she almost collapsed, but they wouldn't let her sit down. . . . Finally she faltered and confessed to heresy. But they were still not satisfied. "'Her repentence is not in her countenance.' She was banished by the colony" (Rowbotham, 1973:17).

Many women were active in the French revolution. They were organized in active revolutionary clubs. In the fall of 1793 after Marat's assassination, the Convention decided to prohibit women's clubs and societies. Two of the leading women, Olympe de Gouges (on November 3, 1793) and Manon Roland (on November 8, 1793) were guillotined. Here is the official interpretation of what women were to learn from their deaths: "In a short time the Revolutionary Tribunal has given women a good lesson which will no doubt not be lost on them. . . . Olympe de Gouges wished to be a statesman, and it seems that the law has punished that conspiratress for having forgotten the virtues appropriate to her sex. The woman Roland was a mother, but wished to rise above herself; the desire to be a savant led her to forget her sex, and that forgetfulness, always dangerous, finished by causing her to perish on the scaffold" (des Jacques, 1972:139).

Mrs. Packard was imprisoned in the State of Illinois Insane Asylum for three years from 1860 to 1863 under a law which permitted a man to commit his wife or child to an asylum on his word alone and without other evidence of insanity. Mrs. Packard was married to a Calvinist minister. She came to hold religious and political views very different from those of her husband. Her attorney describes the difference as follow: "Her views of religion are more in accordance with the liberal views of the age in which we live (than those of her husband). She scouts the Calvinistic doctrine of man's total depravity, and that God has foreordained some to be saved and others to be damned. She stands fully on the platform of man's free agency and accountability to God for his actions. . . . She believes slavery to be a national sin, and the church and the pulpit a proper place to combat this sin. These, in brief, are the points in her religious creed which were combated by Mr. Packard, and were denominated by him as 'emanations from the devil,' or 'the vagaries of a crazed brain'" (Szasz, 1973:57-58). It was not, however, the content of her beliefs alone which led to the decision that she was insane. Her husband had called in three physicians who as expert witnesses testified in the court procedures to her insanity. Her claim to speak as authority in religious and moral matters was judged insane: "QUESTION: What else did she say or do there, that showed marks of insanity? ANSWER: She claimed to be better than her husband – that she was right – and that he was wrong – and that all she did was good, and all he did was bad. . . ." (Szasz, 1973:66). Her case became a *cause celebre*. After her release from the asylum in which she had been held, Mrs. Packard was active in getting the law changed in Illinois.

In Paris during the student uprising of 1968 a feminist group on the Left had prepared leaflets: "As we walked around we handed out leaflets, particularly to women. A crowd of about a hundred people followed us around; most of them were hostile. We had been prepared for significant opposition from men, even afraid of it; but even so were not prepared for such depth and breadth of outrage. Here were 'movement' men shouting insults at us: 'Lesbians,' 'Strip;' 'What you need is a good fuck'. . . ." (quoted by Mitchell, 1972:86).

In 1969 a major demonstration in Washington was organized on the occasion of Nixon's inauguration. A women's group had arranged to burn their voter's registration cards to demonstrate how little getting the vote had done to change women's oppression. As the rally went on, the group began to sense that they were not going to be given a chance to speak. "Dave Dellinger introduces the rally with a stirring denunciation of the war and racism. 'What about women, you schmuchk,' I shout. 'And, uh, a special message from Women's Liberation,' he adds. Our moment comes, M., from the Washington group, stands up to speak. This isn't the protest against the movement men, which is the second on the agenda, just fairly innocuous radical rhetoric – except that it's a good looking woman talking about women. The men go crazy. 'Take if off!' 'Take her off the stage and fuck her!' "(Ellen Willis, quoted by Mitchell, 1972:85).

This is the rough stuff. It points to a boundary which we are not aware of until we read such instances. They show us that more is involved than can be met simply by a work of reasoning and persuasion. There is a social structuring of authority which is prior to and a condition of the development among women of the means to express themselves and to make their condition actionable. Women are defined as persons who have no right to speak as authorities in religious or political settings. Deprived of this right, how can what they might have to say become a basis for knowledge, symbol, moral sanction, complaints, claims, or action? In most of the instances I have cited, it is the claim to authority which is the crucial impiety.

Male Control of the Educational System

The exclusion of women from participating actively in making and creating the forms under which social relations are thought and spoken of has seldom to be so violently repressive. The ordinary socially organized processes of socialization, education, work, and communication perform a more routine, generalized, and effective repression. The educational system is an important aspect of this practice. It trains people in the skills they need in order to participate, at various levels, in the ideological forms of social control (they must be able to read); it trains them in the images and the forms of what the ideology sanctions as real; it trains them in the appropriate relations and in how to identify authoritative ideological sources (what kinds of books, newspapers, etc., to credit, what to discredit, who are the authoritative writers or speakers and who are not). It is part of the system which distributes ideas and ensures the dissemination of new ideological forms as these are produced by the intelligentsia. It is also active itself in producing ideology, both in forms of knowledge in the social sciences, psychology, and education, and in the forms of critical ideas and theories in philosophy and literature.

Prior to the late nineteenth century, women were almost completely denied access to any form of higher education beyond the skills of reading and writing. One of the first major feminist works, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, places their right to education at the centre of her argument. She is responding specifically to Rousseau's prescriptions for educating women which aim to train them for dependency, for permanent childishness, and for permanent incapacity for the autonomous exercise of mind (Wollstonecraft, 1967). During the latter part of the nineteenth century in both Europe and North America opportunities for women in higher education were a major focus of women's struggle. Though women's participation in the educational process at all levels has increased in this century, this participation remains within marked boundaries. Among the most important of these boundaries, I would argue, is that which reserves to men control of the policy-making and decision-making apparatus in the educational system.

In this section I am going to present some of the by now familiar figures which describe how women are located in the educational system as teachers and administrators. I shall not be concerned with viewing these under the aspect of social justice. I am not concerned here with equality of opportunity. I want rather to draw attention to the significance of the inequalities we find for how women are located in the processes of setting standards, producing social knowledge, acting as "gate-keepers" over what is admitted into the systems of distribution, innovating in thought or knowledge or values and in other ways participating as authorities in the ideological work done in the educational process.

In 1970-1, according to the Canadian Department of Labour statistics, women were 62.6 percent of teachers in public schools at all levels.[2] In 1969-70 at the elementary school level where the major focus is the teaching of basic skills, they formed 75.0 percent of teachers (this figure is for eight provinces only; Quebec and Ontario data were not available.[3] At the secondary school level young people receive not only a training in academic and vocational skills, they are also given substantive training in the ideological forms which regulate the social relations of the society (in sports as much as in history or English literature). At this level men predominated, and only 34.0 percent of teachers were women (eight provinces only).

At each next point upward in the hierarchy of control over the educational process, the proportion of women declines. In 1969-70 only 23.6 percent of principals were women (eight provinces only), though there is considerable variation by province.[4] The figures showing the proportion of women school superintendents or the location of women in Departments of Education are not readily available, but there is no reason to believe that we would see a different over-all picture.[5] Figures on the educational staffs of community colleges show distributions in the same direction. In 1970-7 women were only 18.6 percent.[6] At the university level the same pattern is apparent. Gladys Hitchman has brought together the data from studies of six Canadian universities (Alberta, Queen's, McGill, McMaster, UBC, Waterloo). An average of the percentages of women at all ranks in these six is 12.54 percent. Overall, the figures from schools, community colleges, and universities indicate an inverse relation between level in the educational "hierarchy" and the proportion of women.

Within the university the same pattern is repeated. The data brought together by Gladys Hitchman (1974) appear in Table l. The inverse relation between status level and proportion of women is obvious at every level and in all six universities. Women are most heavily concentrated in the positions of lecturer and instructor which are not part of the promotional system leading to professorial rank (the so-called "ladder" positions), and are usually held on only a one-year contract. There is an appreciable drop even to the next level of junior positions, the assistant professors – the first step on the promotion ladder. Women form a very small proportion of full professors.

It is important to keep in mind that we are looking at rather powerful structures of professional control. It is through this structure of ranks and the

Table 1

Percentage of Women in Academic Status Categories for Six Canadian Universities*

	Alberta (1971)	Queen's (1972)	McGill (1970-71)	McMaster (1969)	UBC (1972)	Waterloo (1972)
Lecturers/instructors	68.1	25.0	46.3	26.6	41.9	11.9
Assistant professors	20.0	13.0	19.2	11.9	18.7	9.5
Associate professors	9.1	3.5	12.3	7.2	9.3	3.6
Full professors	4.8	0.5	5.5	3.1	3.4	1.5
Chairpersons	n.d.	0.0	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	0.0
Total Faculty	16.1	7.7	16.8	11.0	18.1	5.3

*Based on Hitchman, 1974.

n.d. = no data.

procedures by which people are advanced from one to another that the professions maintain control over the nature and quality of work that is done and the kinds of people who are admitted to its ranks and to influential positions within it. Two points are of special importance; first the concentration of women in the relatively temporary non-ladder positions. This means that they are largely restricted to teaching, that their work is subject to continual review, and that reappointment is conditional upon conformity. The second point to note is the marked break in the proportion of women between tenured and non-tenured positions. I have made averages from Hitchman's tables in order to bring this out (see Table 2). However, please note that this is a rather rough procedure and the results can be treated as estimates only.

Table 2

Percentage of Women in Non-tenured and Tenured Positions for Six Canadian Universities*

	Alberta (1971)	Queen's (1972)	McGill (1970-71)	McMaster (1969)	UBC (1972)	Waterloo (1972)
Non-tenured	44.50	19.00	32.705	19.25	30.30	10.7
Tenured	6.95	2.00	8.90	5.15	6.35	3.55
Differences	37.55	17.00	23.85	14.10	23.95	8.15

*Estimate based on Hitchman, 1974.

There are considerable variations between universities, largely produced by the differences in proportions of women at the lecturer and instructor level. However, here we are concerned not with accounting for the variations of the over-all pattern but with looking at what it tells us about the structures of professional control in the university. The figures show very clearly a marked jump between proportions of women in tenured and non-tenured positions, ranging from a difference of 8.15 percentage points at Waterloo to 37.55 at Alberta. (The lower break at Waterloo is a function of the lower proportions of women employed at any rank.)

These figures show us that at these six Canadian universities women are markedly underrepresented in positions of full membership of university and profession. These are positions in which their continued employment is no longer subject to the continual scrutiny of their senior colleagues. They are also those from which decisions are made about the continued employment of those as yet without tenure. If we look at these figures as if they represented votes, we find women woefully underrepresented: only two votes in every hundred at Queen's, and at best only about nine in every hundred at McGill.

The tenured faculty, to a large extent, control those admitted to its ranks and what shall be recognized as properly scholarly work.[7] This minimal "voting power" of women helps us to understand why women in more senior positions in the university do not ordinarily represent women's perspectives. They are those who have been passed through this very rigorous filter. They are those whose work and style of work and conduct have met the approval of judges who are largely men. And, in any case, *they are very few.*

There is, I have suggested, more than one type of ideological function in contemporary society. There is that which is concerned with the general moral and expressive modes and with the political and philosophical interpretations which are generalized in the society. There is also that which is directly built into the modes of organizing the various corporate, bureaucratic and professional enterprises which govern the society. There are, we might say, two forms of ideology: the ideologies of expression, evaluation, and theory, and the ideologies of organized action. Women's relation to these two modes are different. Their access to the means of expression and the means of representation of their interests and perspectives in the ideological forms which govern the society are very differently structured. Some figures from a study done by the Women's Action Group (1972) at the University of British Columbia gives us a clearer picture of the effect I am now trying to describe. The faculties of arts (which at the University of British Columbia includes the social sciences) and education represent the ideologies of expression and theory; the fields of commerce and law represent ideologies of organized action. These have of course very different relations to the power structures of the society – the latter being directly implicated in the formations and media in which power is exercised, while the former exercises primarily a control of regulatory function. Table 3 shows how women are located in these fields. It shows quite clearly that from those ideological fields which are directly involved in preparing people for positions in the managerial and governing structure, namely commerce and law, women are completely excluded. They are excluded thereby from occupying the positions in which innovative thinking in those professions is most likely to be done. Therefore they do not participate, at least from positions of authority from which their thinking may enter directly into the training and preparation of professionals, in forming the conceptual framework and relevances in which professionals in these fields are trained.

Table 3

Percentage of Women by Rank with
Ideological Function, UBC, 1972

	Arts	Education	Commerce	Law
Lecturer	44.8	44.4	0	0
Instructor	57.0	38.0	0	0
Assistant Professor	21.2	33.3	0	0
Associate Professor	10.8	17.0	0	0
Full Professor	2.7	15.0	0	0

Source: Report on the Status of Women and the University of British Columbia, Table VIII.

The differences between arts and education are also suggestive. Faculties of education are concerned with training and distribution of knowledge, skills, and the forms of thought. Though innovative work is done in educational theory and practice, it is innovative as a means of transmitting a substance which originates elsewhere. At least in some of the arts fields, critical standards and procedures are being developed and concepts and knowledges originate. The direction of the difference between education and arts indicates the same effect. In the "ladder" positions from assistant professors up, there are lower percentages of women at each rank in arts than in education. The loci of ideological production are largely controlled by men.

In this section I have suggested that we can see two major aspects with respect to how women are located in the educational system. One is that the closer positions come to policy-making or innovation in ideological forms, the smaller the proportion of women. The second is that the closer the ideological forms are to the conceptual and symbolic forms in which power is exercised, the less likely women are to be found in the relevant professional educational structures.

Authority

The control by men of the ideological forms which regulate social relations in this form of society is structured socially by an authority they hold as individuals by virtue of their membership in a class. Authority is a form of power which is a distinctive capacity to get things done in words. What is said or written merely means what the words mean until and unless it is given force by the authority attributed to its "author." When we speak of authority we are speaking of what makes what one person says count. Men are invested with authority as individuals not because they have as individuals special competencies or expertise but because as men they appear as representative of the power and authority of the institutionalized structures which govern the society. Their authority as *individuals* in actual situations of action is generated by a social organization. They do not appear as themselves alone. They are those whose words count, both for each other and for those who are not members of this class. (Note, I am not using the term "class" here in a Marxist sense. It bears its ordinary dictionary meaning only.)

We have by now and in various forms a good deal of evidence of the ways in which this social effect works. It is one which Mary Ellman has described as a distinction between women and men in intellectual matters, "which is simple, sensuous and insignificant: the male body lends credence to assertions, while the female takes it away" (Ellman, 1968:148). A study done by Philip Goldberg which was concerned with finding out whether women were prejudiced against women demonstrates this effect very clearly (Goldberg, 1969). Here is Jo Freeman's description: "He gave college girls sets of booklets containing six identical professional articles in traditional male, female and neutral fields. The articles were identical, but the names of the authors were not. For example, an article in one set would bear the name John T. McKay and in another set the same article would be authored by Joan T. McKay. Each booklet contained three articles by 'women' and three by 'men.' Questions at the end of each article asked the students to rate the articles on value, persuasiveness and profundity and the authors on writing style and competence. The male authors fared better in every field, even such 'feminine' areas as Art History and Dietetics" (Freeman, 1971). There seems to be something like a plus factor which adds force and persuasiveness to what men say and a minus factor which depreciates and weakens what is said by women.

A study reported by Jessie Bernard describes this effect in the context of teaching. A woman and a man were chosen by their department as being roughly equal in their ability to communicate. Each gave two identical lectures, which were in fact chapters from books by established sociologists. The study was concerned with finding out whether students learned more from one sex than the other. As determined by examination results, there was no difference. However, other differences did emerge and it is these that are relevant here. "The young woman had less impact than the young man. Many more of her listeners gave neutral or impersonal résumés of the talk when tested. The young man evoked much more reaction" (Bernard, 1964:256). There was a difference in "credibility": "Fewer of the young man's listeners than of the young woman's hid behind the 'he said' dodge. They accepted what he said as fact. The implication is that material presented by a man is more likely to be accepted at face value than material presented by a woman: it seems to have more authority; it is more important" (Bernard, 1964:257). This effect must generally diminish the authority of women teachers (at all levels) vis-à-vis students. I refer the reader to a moving retrospective account by one of Suzanne Langer's students which expresses this (Pochoda, 1972). Once brought into focus it is, I believe, an effect which academic women can recognize at once as an ordinary working condition.

It is not of course confined to academia. The way in which the sex of the speaker modifies the authority of the message has been observed in other ideological fields. Lucy Komisar reports that in advertising women "receive instructions about how to do their housework from men: Arthur Godfrey, who probably never put his hands into soapsuds, tells women across the country why they ought to add still another step to their washing routine with Axion Pre-Soak. Joseph Daley, president of Grey Advertising, says that *men are used because the male voice is the voice of authority* (Komisar, 1972, my emphasis). Chesler's study of preferences among psychotherapists and their patients shows that the majority of women patients prefer male therapists and that the majority of male psychotherapists prefer women patients. The reasons the women give for preferring male psychotherapists are that they generally feel more comfortable with them and that they have more respect for and confidence in a man's competence and authority. Chesler reports that both men and women in her sample said that they trusted and respected men as people and as authorities more than they did women (Chesler, 1972).

A study done by Fidell on sex discrimination in university hiring practices in psychology shows the intersection of this effect with the educational system of controls described in the preceding section. She used an approach very similar to Goldberg's, constructing two sets of fictional descriptions of academic background and qualifications (including the Ph.D.). Identical descriptions in one set had a woman's name attached and in the other a man's. The sets of descriptions were sent to chairpersons of all colleges and universities in the United States offering graduate degrees in psychology. They were asked to estimate the chance of the individuals described getting an offer of a position and at what level, etc. Her findings supported the hypothesis of discrimination on the basis of sex: "The distributions of level of appointment were higher for men than for women. Further, men received more 'on line' (academic positions leading to tenure) responses than women. Only men were offered full professorships" (Fidell, 1970). It seems as though the class attribution of authority which increases the value of men's work constitutes something rather like a special title to the positions of control and influence and hence to full active membership in the intelligentsia.

This effect is socially constructed. It is not a biological attribute. This becomes more observable when we attend to the social class dimensions of authority. It is not, as Ellman (1968) suggests, merely the male *body*, but rather the male body literally *clothed* in the trappings of his class which "lends credence to assertions." The working man, the native Indian, the black man are also depreciated. It is a social effect which preserves the status and control of male members of the ruling classes over the ideological forms and at the same time renders that control effective as authority.

These patterns are integral to the *social organization* of the ideological formations of this type of society. More than one study has shown that well-educated and middle-class people have what may be described as greater deference[8] to the opinions and perspectives of interviewers who represent the "university" than do people with relatively little education (Schatzman and Strauss, 1966; Komarovsky, 1967). Pheterson's findings in a study using procedures similar to Goldberg's, but limiting the topics of articles to matters within the women's domain, found that middle-aged "uneducated" women did not respond as Goldberg's college student respondents had (Goldberg, 1969). Hochschild describes her findings thus: "Pheterson (1969) explored prejudice against women among middle-aged, uneducated women. This time the professional articles were on child discipline, special education, and marriage. The women judged female work to be equal to and even a bit better than male work" (1973). Some women at least appear not to be fully integrated into the social organization of ideological formation. In some areas of discourse at least men are not constituted as authority. The class structure mediated by educational institutions is differentially articulated to this social organization. "Educated" middle-class women are fully part of it. Their subordination is the second term which constitutes the grammar of authority. Their silence is integrated into and generated by its organization (Gornick, 1972; Smith, 1974).

Circles

The metaphor of a "circle" of speakers and hearers relevant to one another is helpful in conceptualizing this as an aspect of the social organization of ideology. It seems likely that the process of developing ideological forms is controlled by restricting participation in such "circles" to properly authorized participants. Only the perspectives and thinking of these get *entered* into the discourse as its themes and topics. Jessie Bernard describes this in the academic context as "the stag effect" (Bernard, 1964:157) and refers to an informal experiment in which professional subjects were asked to name the top 10 in their field. Leading women members of the profession were unlikely to be mentioned. "When this was pointed out to the subjects, they tended to look sheepish and say they never thought of her. She was not in the same image of their profession as were the men. . . . It is not that the work of distinguished academic women scholars was not taken seriously; it was only that in most disciplines the image of the professional did not include them" (Bernard, 1964:176).

It seems that women as a social category lack proper title to membership in the circle of those who count for one another in the making of ideological forms. To identify a woman novelist as a woman novelist is to place her in a special class outside that of novelists in general. The minus factor attached to what they say, write, or image described in the previous section, is another way of seeing how what they say, write or image is not "automatically" part of the discourse. I suggest that if we observe how these things get done in our professions, in literary reviews, and in ordinary situations of meeting among professionals, we would see that what women say and do has a conditional status only. It awaits recognition by a fully qualified male participant. It awaits sanction. It must be picked up (and sometimes taken over) by a man if it is to become part of the discourse.

The previous discussion has been concerned largely with the authority of the written or printed word. But these are patterns which are clearly observable in face to face interaction also. We can and have observed them ourselves. There are by now a number of studies which serve to fill out our description of how male control over the topics and themes of discourse is maintained in actual situations of interaction. For example, Strodtbeck and Marm in their study of jury deliberations report that men talked considerably more than women. The differences, however, were more than quantitative. They also describe what seems to be a general pattern of interaction between women and men. Men's talk was more directed towards the group task while women reacted with agreement, passive acceptance, and understanding (Strodtbeck and Marm, 1956). The pattern I have observed also involves women becoming virtually an audience, facilitating with support or comments, but not becoming among those who carry the talk and whose remarks are directed towards one another.

Characteristically, women talking with men use styles of talk which throw the control to others, as for example, by interspersing their talk with interjections which reassign the responsibility for its meaning to others, as by saying "you know" or failing to name objects or things or to complete sentences. Expectations for men's and women's speech differ and must have an effect on how people are seen with respect to how and how much to talk. Caudill describes a supervisor of nurses as "an assertive person," "willing to express her opinion in unequivocal terms." Yet his data show that in meetings she spoke less on the average than the hospital administrative and psychiatric personnel, including a resident described as "passive and withdrawn" (Caudill, 1958:249).

Candy West has made a study of differences between single sex and mixed sex conversations which focuses upon the differential rights to speak of men and women (1974). She observed a variety of different "devices" used by men apparently with women's consent which serve to maintain male control of the topics of conversation. For example, men tended to complete women's sentences, to give minimal responses to topics initiated and carried by women, and to interrupt without being sanctioned. She gives one example from a transcribed conversation which went as follows: "After thirty lines of talk, during which the female lays out a problem she's having and the male responds minimally on every occasion of his turn arising, a twenty-five second pause ensues. Then he commences to discuss a papers *he's* working on – without semantically having ever acknowledged her subject" (West, 1974:37). Her study describes "a pattern of male control of conversation, principally through the use of interruptions and the withdrawal of active participation in topic development" (West, 1974:19-20).

In professional conversations we can also identify a collection of devices which may be used to restrict women's control of what West calls "topic development." Among them are devices which are used to recognize or enter what women have said into the discourse under male sanction. For example, a suggestion or point contributed by a woman may be ignored as its point of origin. When it is re-introduced at a later point by a man, it is then "recognized" and becomes part of the topic. Or if it is recognized at the time, it is re-attributed by the responder to another male (in the minutes of the meeting, it will appear as having been said by someone else). Or the next speaker after the woman may use a device such as, "What Dorothy really means is . . ." Or the woman's turn is followed by a pause following which the topic is picked up at the previous speaker's turn as if she had not spoken. We can, I am sure, add to the list of these devices and also cite many exceptions to these patterns. They arise, however, out of very general assumptions about the socially organized relations of men and women in relation to control of the ideological forms of the society. Their specifics may vary, but the over-all patterns of control over topics and themes recur. The social organization of men-women relations in such contexts can be understood as generating the appropriate practices, devices, and perceptions as these are situationally relevant and appropriate. The grammar of these relations is understood by both sexes. It is not simply imposed by men upon women. Women participate in the ways in which they are silenced.

Women as Subject

I have focused here on the various ways in which women have been and are excluded from full participation in creating the forms of thought which constitute the social consciousness of a society. By this point in the women's movement I believe we must be familiar with the effect of this. Modes of thinking and imaging our experience are produced for us by others who do not share our experience or position in the world. They are produced by those who hold the superordinate positions in the society and whose consciousness extends into the world as a reflection of the structures of power within which they act upon and know it. De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1961) has made an important distinction between men as subjects and women as other. It is as if the world is thought from the position of a consciousness which has its centre in a ruling class of men – what Kate Millett has described as "the patriarchy" (Millett, 1971). From this centre women appear as objects. In relation to men of these classes women's consciousness does not appear as an autonomous origin of knowledge, an authoritative perspective on the world from a different position in and experience of it. Women do not appear to men as men do to one another, as persons who might share in the common construction of a social reality. It is the social organizational substructure of this relation which we have been assembling in the preceding sections. We have begun to look at this relation as it is actually practised and enforced. If women have failed to find a position from which we might reflect back upon men as subjects, it is these institutionalized structures and practices excluding us from functioning as subject which *enforce* our failure.

It is important to recognize that the deprivation of authority and the ways in which women have been trained to practise the complement of male control of "topic development" (West, 1974:20) have the effect of making it difficult for women to treat one another as relevant figures. We have difficulty in asserting authority for ourselves. We have difficulty in grasping authority for women's voices and for what women have to say. We are thus deprived of the essential basis for developing among ourselves the discourse out of which symbolic structures, concepts, images, and knowledges might develop which would be adequate to our experience and to devising forms of organization and action relevant to our situations and interest. In participating in the world of ideas as objects rather than as subjects we have come to take for granted that our thinking is to be authorized by an external source of authority. Thus, as Bostock says: "one of the consequences of living in a world intellectually dominated by men . . . is that women try to have opinions which will satisfy the approved standards of the world; and in the last analysis, these are standards imposed on them by men, which, in practice, means that our opinions are kept fairly rigorously separated from our own lived experience. If a woman today wants to have opinions which are truly her own, she has to check them against her experience, and often not against her personal experience alone, *but against a collective one* (Bostock, 1972, my emphasis). Bostock is laying down an essential condition to the development by women for women of social forms of consciousness. But it has not been easy for women to take what women have to say as authoritative, nor is it easy for women to find their own voices convincing. It is hard for us to listen to ourselves. The voice of our own experience is equally defective.

Lack of authority then is lack of authority for ourselves and for other women. We have become familiar in the women's movement with the importance of women learning to relate to one another. We need also to learn how to treat what other women say as a source and basis for our own work and thinking.

The institutionalized practices of excluding women from the ideological work of society is the reason we have a history constructed largely from the perspective of men, and largely about men. This is why we have so few women poets and why the records of those who survived the hazards of attempting poetry are so imperfect (Bernikow, 1974). This is why we know so little of women visionaries, thinkers, and political organizers (Rowbotham, 1973). this is why we have an anthropology which tells us about other societies from the perspective of men and hence has so distorted the cross-cultural record that it may now be impossible to learn what we might have known about how women lived in other forms of society. This is why we have a sociology which is written from the perspective of positions in a male-dominated ruling class and is set upin terms of the relevances of the institutional power structures which constitute those positions (Bernard, 1973). This is why in English literature there is a corner called women in literature or women novelists or the like, but an over-all critical approach to literature which assumed that it is written by men and perhaps even largely for men.

The ideological practices of our society provide us with forms of thought and knowledge which constrain us to treat ourselves as objects. We have learned to practise, as Rowbotham points out, a nihilistic relation to our own subjectivity and experience (Rowbotham, 1974:29-37). We have learned to live inside a discourse which is not ours and which expresses and describes a landscape in which we are alienated and which preserves that alienation as integral to its practice. In a short story, Doris Lessing describes a girl growing up in Africa whose consciousness has been wholly formed within traditional British literary culture. Her landscape, her cosmology, her moral relations, her botany, are those of the English novels and fairy tales. Her own landscape, its forms of life, her immediate everyday world do not fully penetrate and occupy her consciousness. They are not *named* (Lessing, 1966). This is the ideological rupture which Marx and Engels have given us the means to understand. Lessing's story is a paradigm of the situation of women in our society.

It is important, I think, to remember that we are not alone in this. Sheila Rowbotham has drawn a parallel between the experience of women in this relation and that of working class men (alas, she does not refer to working class women, but we are all learning all the time). She writes:

> There is a long inchoate period during which the struggle between the language of experience and the language of theory becomes a kind of agony. In the making of the working class in Britain the conflict of silence with "their" language, the problem of paralysis and connection has been continuous. Every man who has worked up through the labour movement expressed this in some form. The embarrassment about dialect, the divorce between home talking and educated language, the otherness of "culture" – their culture is intense and painful. The struggle is happening now every time a worker on strike has to justify his position in the alien structures of the television studio before the interrogatory camera of the dominant class, or every

> time a working-class child encounters a middle-class teacher (Rowbotham, 1974:32).

In insisting that women appear as subjects in the formation of a social consciousness, we represent ourselves. We cannot break, though we can be aware of, the other enforced silences. And we can assert that there is not one way of seeing the world, not one way from which it may be known. There is not one universal subject from whose perspective knowledge can be simply transformed into an objective and universal account. We can recognize and explore the implications of this recognition. We can also confront the institutional practices which in an everyday and routine way constitute women as other in the ideological relation. These are the same or similar practices by which others are excluded and by which the appearance of a single subject is created out of the silences of many.

Conclusions

The implications of this analysis for women academics are far-reaching. Matters are not improved simply by including women in the professional and academic positions of influence. The professional discourse has by now a momentum of its own. The structures which have been developed have become the criteria and standards of proper professional performance. Being a professional involves knowing how to do it this way and doing it this way is how we recognize ourselves as professionals. The perspective of men is not apparent as such, for it has become institutionalized as the "field" or the "discipline." Similar considerations apply to the left-wing intelligentsia whether the perspectives of men are institutionalized as the issues and topics of radical discourse in relation to which people locate themselves and are located politically.

We cannot be content with working as academics in the box created by the male monopoly of artistic, ideological, and other symbolic resources so that what we do in relation to women and arising out of our interests and experience as women is defined as "women's business" and confined in the same way as women's magazines, women's novels, women's programs, etc. This essentially restricts our topics to those of the relevance of women's roles. I now distrust that orientation in sociology (undoubtedly with its parallels in other disciplines) which makes the topic of "sex roles" a central aspect of women's studies courses. Further, if I teach a sociology *of* women I am perpetuating the status of women as objects in relation to the ideological constructions written from the position of men. We must, it seems to me, begin an examination and critique of how women are constituted as other in the ideological formations which establish the hegemony of male consciousness.

In developing forms of thought and knowledge *for* women, academic women must offer a major critique of the existing disciplines and theoretical frames. We are confronted virtually with the problem of reinventing the world of knowledge, of thought, of symbols and images, not of course by repudiating everything that has been done but by subjecting it to exacting scrutiny and criticism from the position of women as subject (or knower). This means, for example, claiming the right to examine literature from the perspective of women. That is to do much more than to establish the right of women to honour and examine the work of women poets and novelists or to study the role of women in fiction or drama. In sociology it means, I think, constructing a sociology *for* women rather than *of* women. By this I mean a sociology which will analyze and account for women's position in society and is capable of examining social structure from the perspective of women as subjects. Research is needed which begins with questions that could not have been posed before. I have learned from colleagues with whom I share an interdisciplinary course in women's studies what it means to examine anthropology and psychology from this point of view. I have begun to have a sense of the extraordinary depth and extent of what remains to be discovered by women working from the perspective and experience of women. I believe it goes much farther than I could have thought before participating in this course and approaching it from this (shared) perspective.

There are other implications. Some of them are difficult to come to terms with given the social organization of ideological formation and the productive organization of which it is part, but we should begin to find out how to think them anyway. Insisting on constituting women as subject (rather than that abstract mythical "woman") raises questions about the relation of women members of the intelligentsia and their work to the existence and experience of other women. Exploration of what it means to be *responsible* to women in the society as *subjects*; what it means to develop forms of thought and knowledge capable of expressing their experience, examining and being capable of making intelligible to them how the world as they know and suffer it is determined, providing them with the knowledge, information, and means to think and act in relation to it; these are tasks proposed by the contradiction implicit in our situation as academic women (as it has been analyzed here). We cannot just turn our backs on it by opting for membership in an elite whose ideological forms claim a spurious universality. A critique of the social organization of the academic enterprise is indicated which would examine how it is rendered academic, that is, how the forms of knowledge, relevances, conceptual frameworks, etc., are bounded by an institutionalized discourse which is an integral part of the institutions doing the work of ruling in this type of society.

Notes

[1] Reprinted from *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 12, 4, Part 1, 1975.

[2] *Women in the Labour Force: Facts and Figures* (1973 edition). Table 78, p. 201.

[3] *Women in the Labour Force: Facts and Figures* (1971 edition). Table 37, p. 91. The percentages are my computation. The 1973 edition of *Women in the Labour*

Force did not give this information, so I used the 1971 edition.

[4] *Women in the Labour Force: Facts and Figures* (1971), Table 35, p. 87.

[5] Linda Shuto of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in an address to the Department of Education workshop on "Sexism in Schools" (North Vancouver, 12-13 June 1975) reported that there were no women superintendents in British Columbia and no women senior officials in the Department of Education.

[6] *Women in the Labour Force: Facts and Figures* (1973), Table 71, p. 187. This percentage is my computation. For both high school and community college we need to take into account the effect of a second factor on these percentages. In both, vocational and technical courses are a significant part of the curriculum. However, even the 10 subjects most representative of women show only 39 percent women (my computation from Table 76, p. 197).

[7] This is generally true at least in a negative sense. The administrative structures of the universities provide for various forms of control over the collegial decision-making process, but it is only in exceptional cases that renewal, tenure, or promotion awards are made against collegial recommendation.

[8] Differences between middle and working class respondents are described in terms of greater ability on the part of middle-class respondents to "take the role of the other" etc. My renaming is ironic but not I think unwarranted by the descriptions. See in particular Komarovsky's discussion of the differences between her interviews with wives of "blue-collar" workers and earlier studies of college-educated women (Komarovsjy, 1967:14-22). She notices the respondents' relative "unconcern with the interviewer's attitude" (p. 15).

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11

Knowledge and Gender in Physical Education[1]

Alison Dewar

If, as Madeline Grumet (1981) suggests, curriculum inquiry involves acts of interpretation and critical reflection because "curriculum is the collective story we tell our children about our past, our present and our future" (p. 115), it is important that we examine the contents of the stories we tell and ask questions about whose past, present and future the knowledge in the curriculum represents. Asking questions like this is an extremely important aspect of curricular criticism. Critical curriculum enquiry begins with the assumption that all knowledge is not created equal. Typically, the stories we tell in schools, colleges and universities are ones that reflect the past, present and future of powerful groups in society. The knowledge we teach in our educational system has a white, middle class, androcentric bias. More importantly, this bias is not presented as one possible version of reality, but most often is taught as the only legitimate and, therefore, representative version of reality. Critical curriculum inquiry challenges the bias in the curriculum and argues for the inclusion of knowledge that is representative of the experiences and lives of *all* humans, and not simply those of powerful, middle class, white males.

Feminist educational researchers have responded to sexism in schools in a number of ways. Much of the research has been focused on the ways in which schools reward socially appropriate sex role behaviors and how the curriculum contributes to gender stereotyping. In this work, researchers are concerned about how school provides students with experiences that socialize them in ways that reflect and reproduce the gender differentiation that occurs in society. For example, Delamont's (1980) reader on sex roles and the school, King's (1978) work on elementary classrooms, Sharpe's (1976) research on how girls learn to be women, and more recently Minn's (1985) discussion on sex typing in the elementary school, and Barrett's (1985) exploration of stereotyping in schools show that gender stereotyping occurs in schools in a number of different ways. It has been found that teachers' expectations and pupils' behaviors, academic interests and achievements, and career choices reflect gender stereotypes. In addition, classroom practices (seating arrangements, management strategies, work and play activities) and school rituals (assemblies, uniforms) are frequently organized and structured around gender stereotypes.

Other work looks specifically at knowledge in the curriculum. There are a number of feminist researchers who have developed analyses that are sensitive to the complexities of the relations between patriarchal ideology and the reproduction and legitimation of the social relations of gender in society. Examples are Spender and Sarah's (1980) edited collection of essays on sexism and education, Spender's (1982), and Weiner's (1985) analyses of sexism in schooling, and Culley and Portuges' (1985), Thompson's (1983), Sherman and Beck's (1977), and Smith's (1975) critiques of the social construction of knowledge in higher education. The major emphasis of this work is a critique of the social construction of knowledge in the curriculum. Researchers working in this area are interested in understanding the ways in which knowledge has been socially constructed so that patriarchal definitions of reality are presented to us as objective, universal truths about all human experience. Mary O'Brien (1981) argues that male theorizing and male philosophy act as an ideology of male supremacy. She suggests that what women need to do – to put it in the simplest way – is to be able to demonstrate that male dominant culture and the male-stream thought that buttresses and justifies it are both, in some sense, prejudiced by the very fact that they are "masculine." Her point is that:

> male-stream thought is ideological thought, what I am saying is that it misrepresents one level of reality in the need to give expression to another level of reality. Whatever men are looking at, and whatever else they may be, they are male. The taken-for-granted reality, which we are interested in here because we must examine it critically, is the perceived reality of being male. If we know how the process of ideological thought has worked with men's efforts to give expression to masculine experience, we are in a better position to subject male-stream thought to a critical analysis. (p. 6)

Male-stream thought is sexist because it misrepresents reality. It assumes that men and male experience are normative and knowledge reflecting this experience is taken to be universal and representative of all human experience. Male-stream thought has been successful in presenting its version of reality as *the* version of reality because it appears to us as "objective," and "value-neutral," rather than as an ideology of male supremacy. As Catherine MacKinnon (1982) suggests:

> feminism does not see its view as subjective, partial, or undermined but as a critique of the purported generality, disinterestedness and universality of prior accounts. A perspectivity (objectivity) is revealed as a strategy of male hegemony . . . power to create the whole world from (a single) point of view is power in its male form. (p. 537)

This is an extremely important point and one that is a cornerstone of feminist curricular criticism. An essential part of this critique has been to show that male hegemony is won, not given, and the control of the production and dissemination of knowledge plays a vital role in the contest to achieve and maintain male power in society. An example may be useful at this point. The ideological belief that men, because of their biology, are naturally superior (stronger, more competitive, and powerful) to women is only believable if it appears to confirm our everyday experiences in the world in aspects of our lives that are apparently untainted by ideology. One such area is sport. Sport is a highly visible arena where individuals compete against one another in an attempt to identify the very best. That is, the strongest, the fastest, and the most powerful. Competition appears to us as fair and, therefore, free from ideological infusion. We might not believe a politician who simply tells us that men are superior to women, because we do not trust the neutrality of the source. But sport is different. When women and men compete against one another in head to head competition, the results are clear for all to see – men are faster, stronger and more powerful. We tend to believe this evidence because it appears to us as free from ideological contamination and, therefore, male superiority is presented to us via sport in such a way that it appears to be a biological fact of life.

The important point in this example is that "objectivity" and "value-neutrality" provide ideology with a means of infusing and reinforcing our experiences in the world. What it does is divert attention away from alternative explanations for our experiences. We tend not to ask why sport takes on the forms it does, which emphasize only certain abilities and skills which happen to be those that favor men and are valued in our society. Typically, we focus on the outcomes of the competition and use these as the basis for our judgements of men's and women's capabilities. When this happens and we focus on the outcomes of the experiences themselves rather than on the ways in which they have been historically produced and socially constructed, patriarchal ideology is in a powerful position to secure the continued legitimation and justification of male hegemony. Jesse Bernard (1975) perhaps says it best in her comment:

> how does it happen that so much is made of the fact that the blood of males has more androgen than that of females, but nothing is made of the fact that it has more uric acid? And how does it happen that the net effect of the vast corpus of research leads to the conclusion that men are superior to women on all the variables that are highly valued in our society, namely: muscular or kinetic strength, competitiveness, power, need for achievement and autonomy? In brief, what are the components of the archetypal macho variable, offensive aggressiveness? These are the variables that interest man. These are the variables they judge one another by. These are the variables that are rewarded in our society. (p. 10)

Feminist curricular criticism has done more than challenge male-stream thought. There are also researchers who have begun to develop an alternative, to construct knowledge about women that reflects women's orientations to and experiences of the world. Duelli Klein (1984) outlines the purpose of this work in her statement that:

> By endorsing the feminist principle that "the personal is political" women's studies declares itself as an overtly political alternative to man-made education and is determined to produce and transmit knowledge in which women's intellectual activities are given as much legitimation and recognition by society as are men's. (p. 294)

This work builds on critiques of the "objectivist" nature of male-stream thought and argues for a reconstruction of knowledge that does not separate the personal and political from what it means to "know." This new synthesis is assumed to represent and explain women's lives more accurately.

This work assumes that a critique of "man-made" education and the inclusion in the curriculum of knowledge which breaks the silences that exist about women and their experiences of the world will serve as a challenge to patriarchal ideology and, therefore, contribute to the transformation rather than the reproduction of the social relations of gender. This assumption rests on a somewhat naive and mechanistic view of socialization in which it is assumed that students will learn and be socialized into the gender categories the school creates. This is clearly not always the case. The fact that schools teach students ideological messages about gender is not a guarantee that students will learn them. Pupils and teachers resist and counteract messages they receive in schools in a variety of ways.

Anyon (1983), in an exploration of working class and affluent girls' responses to contradictory sex role ideologies, suggests that "gender development involves not so much passive imprinting as active response to social contradictions" (p. 19). Her critique is important as it stresses two simple, but often neglected, points. First, she suggests that the messages students receive about gender in schools are rarely unified or complete. Most often they are contradictory and inconsistent. Secondly, individuals do not passively accept these messages but respond to them in different ways. Thus, an understanding of the social reproduction of gender cannot be achieved by simply analysing school curricula. It involves a more complex analysis of the ideological messages contained in the curriculum and, most importantly, students' responses to them. In other words, patriarchal ideology is not created and reproduced in a vacuum. It is modified, reproduced and challenged by the actions and reactions of individuals as they interpret and respond to their experiences in educational institutions. Therefore, it is important to understand not only how individuals react to patriarchal ideology but how they respond to knowledge that challenges this world view if we are to understand the dynamics of the process of social reproduction and transformation.

There are a few examples of research in education that have examined the relations between the knowledge in the curriculum, students' responses to this knowledge, and the social reproduction of gender. The majority of this work has focused on white working class males (e.g., Corrigan, 1979; Everhart, 1983; Willis, 1977). This research provides examples of analyses which begin to explain the dynamics of the process by which working class "lads" create and express their class and gender identities in school, and how such forms of class and gender expression can be implicated in the reproduction of class relations.

There have been few studies that have explored the ways in which girls or women make sense of the social structures that bind their lives and which seek to understand how these girls and women interpret, modify, challenge or reproduce the patriarchal gender relations that exist in society. The research that has explored the reproduction of gender relations has focused on young or adolescent girls. The most notable of these are McRobbie's (1978) analysis of "working class girls and the culture of femininity," Fuller's (1985) examination of black girls in a London comprehensive school, Anyon's (1983) exploration of working class and affluent girls' responses to contradictory sex role ideologies in the United States, Gaskell's (1983) study of Canadian working class girls, and Stanworth's (1913) study of sexual division in the classroom. These five studies, although quite different in many respects, share a common goal. They aim at understanding the ways in which girls in different class locations and of different racial and cultural backgrounds make sense of their gender identities in the social world. They clearly illustrate the importance of understanding the links between knowledge, structure and human agency.

If we are to understand the ways in which patriarchal ideology is produced and reproduced in educational settings, it is essential to examine the ways in which individuals experience the curriculum and the actions that they take in order to make sense of it. Analyses of gender relations in education, then, must explore both the patriarchal structures and ideology that exist in the system and students' experiences of and reactions to contradictions in this social order.

In this paper, I will present some of the findings from a case study of the social reproduction of gender in one undergraduate physical education program in a Canadian university. The purpose of the paper is to explore how knowledge about gender is organized within courses in the curriculum and to examine students' interpretation of and reactions to this knowledge. Physical education is an unusual and intriguing area in which to explore constructions of gender in the curriculum because it is one of the few subjects in the curriculum that provides patriarchal ideology with an opportunity to present itself as biological fact rather than as a social construction. This is possible because sport is the subject matter of physical education. With its focus on performance outcomes in activities where male defined standards predominate, which urges us to go faster, higher and stronger, physical education is able to buttress and legitimize the view that women, because of their biology, go slower and lower and are weaker than men.

Despite its potential to legitimize and reinforce male hegemony, physical education is an area that has largely been ignored by feminist writers. This lack of interest is somewhat surprising given the historical importance of physical education as a mechanism for the development of "manliness" in young

Victorian and Edwardian "gentlemen" (e.g., Connell, 1983; Mangan, 1983). Physical education has played, and continues to play, a pivotal role in the development and social construction of masculinity, which makes it an important site for exploring the social construction of gender. Perhaps it is physical education's strong links with masculinity that have contributed to this neglect. The present study represents an attempt to break this silence and is a first step towards gaining an in-depth understanding of the processes involved in the social reproduction of gender in physical education. Physical education degree programs in Canada are characterized by diversity rather than homogeneity and include: primarily school based, disciplinary degree programs (based on the study of physical education as an academic discipline), and programs of kinesiology, kinanthropmetry and others that have the scientific analysis of human movement as their focus. The programs I observed was based on the study of physical education as an academic discipline.

The study was conducted over a ten-month period (one academic year), from September 1984 to June 1985, and used three data collection techniques: participant observation, ethnographic interviewing and document analysis. Each of the techniques was used at different times in the study, both separately and in conjunction with one another, as a means of generating and testing themes and ideas from the data during the fieldwork.

The data reported in this paper are primarily drawn from interviews with 43 (28 male, 15 female) students and 14 (11 male, 3 female) faculty. The interviews were structured along the lines of a conversation. Each interview began with an explanation of the research and the informants were told that the interview was one means by which I was attempting to gain an understanding of their perceptions of and feelings about their university program, physical education and gender issues. In each case, informants were encouraged to set the pace, direction and length of the interview. I introduced topics where appropriate, and probed for clarification and detail when necessary, and also responded to any question about my experiences or opinions on any of the issues discussed during the interview.[2]

The data were analysed in two stages. First, they were analysed as an ongoing process during the field work, where emergent themes and ideas were tested, scrutinized and developed. Secondly, after the completion of the field work, the data were analysed a number of different times in order to synthesize, collage and develop themes, which were then checked and rechecked against the data from other sources. This process of constant comparison of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) facilitated the reduction and organization of the data in a way that addressed the central problem of the study, the social construction of gender in the program.

The Curriculum

The curriculum in this program is organized around a distinction between "biological and behavioral" courses on the one hand and "socio-cultural" courses on the other. Biological and behavioral courses use theory and methods from the biological and behavioral sciences to analyze human physical performance. They include methods such as analyses of the basic structure and functions of the human body and their relations to exercise, analyses of human growth and development in relation to physical performance, the study of the effects of exercise on body system, and the relationship of the functional capacity of individual systems to maximal human performance. They have a self-consciously "applied" orientation, focusing on knowledge that is potentially "useful" to students in the sense that it has applications to vocational practices like coaching or teaching or to the health professions.

Socio-cultural courses in the program have a different focus. In these courses knowledge from the social sciences and humanities is used to analyse play, games and sport as historically produced, socially constructed cultural forms. In these courses students are presented with a different frame of reference for analyzing play, games and sports. In socio-cultural courses students are expected to question the ways in which play, games and sports are constituted in society and, as such, they are exposed to critical analyses of the dominant frameworks within which these activities are understood and policies governing their practices are constituted.

The program distinguishes between required and elective theory courses. The selection and distribution of required and elective courses indicates the importance of an "applied" orientation in the program. Six of the nine required courses are "biological and behavioral" courses and focus on knowledge that can be used to analyse performance. The remaining three courses in the required core are "socio-cultural" courses, which present students with an alternative means of analysing play, games and sport. The elective courses follow the pattern that exists in the required core. The majority (18 to 22) of elective courses are "biological and behavioral" courses and the remaining four are "socio-cultural" courses.

The emphasis on "biological and behavioral" courses and "applied" knowledge in the program means that attention is focused on explaining differences in the performance capabilities of individuals in biological and behavioral terms. This orientation provides students with a framework that downplays social and historical analyses of differences in favour of biological and behavioral ones.

Despite the strong "applied" emphasis in the program, it is important to stress that this is not the only emphasis. The co-existence of two, quite different, conceptions of physical education in "biological and behavioral" and "socio-cultural" courses provides students with alternative definitions and interpretations of important knowledge in physical education.

Gender in the Curriculum

Gender is taught in the program in three different ways, each of which involves a different version of what gender is and how it matters. These three different approaches to gender tell us something about how, why and in what ways gender is defined when it is taught in courses in the program. However, it is important to look at the other side of the coin. The overwhelming response to gender in this program was silence. Most often it was simply not discussed or taught. What follows is a discussion of the ways in which gender was discussed and interpreted in the few courses and on the few occasions when the silence was broken.

Gender as an Issue of Sex Differences

Gender is most frequently taught in "biological and behavioral" courses as a variable that affects performance. It is presented as one of a number of possible variables that affect performance or it appears as information on a chart or graph illustrating the differences that exist between women and men. For example, in a discussion of strength, data which show that males are stronger than females. Relative measures of strength (strength relative to body mass) are rarely, if ever, presented to students. Relative measures of strength cannot be used to illustrate sex differences and, if used, would show that men are only stronger than women on measures of absolute strength.

Typically, faculty teaching these biological and behavioral courses view gender as a relatively unimportant variable. The following comments illustrate this view:

> well the bigger difference is age ... I don't like to see gender identified too much because I think that's something special. If anything I think it's irrelevant.
>
> no not really as an issue. I think in terms of research it's a grouping factor because to look at differences between the sexes in terms of your physiological responses and performance abilities and understand why the difference is there in performance.
>
> I don't deal with gender. It's a functional anatomy and physiology course so we don't deal with it. It don't think the book deals with it, only to say the skeletal structure is different for men and women.

These faculty view gender as a variable that can be controlled and, therefore, ignored or described as part of other material being presented in the course. As another faculty member explained:

> O.K., take the essence of the game, forget about gender ... analyse the skill ... look at absolute values ... what I try to do is look at them objectively and quantify what goes on so we get rid of this mumbo jumbo ... do the same sort of thing, start to compare, to quantify events irrespective of whether it's a man or a woman and then you try to put them on some continuum, you've taken gender out.

For this individual "taking gender out" and analysing games "objectively" is what one tries to do in biological and behavioral analyses of performance. It is assumed by faculty teaching biological and behavioral courses that gender is only an issue in the biological and behavioral theory courses that deal with aspects of performance in which there are well established and clearly recognizable sex difference. For example, gender is recognized and accepted as an issue in courses that examine the effects of growth and development on performance because it is a widely accepted and well established "scientific" fact that there are clearly documentable sex differences in rates of growth and development. This definition of gender is consistent with the treatment of gender as unimportant because the existence of these sex differences is seen as an interesting but accepted fact that ought to be described rather than to be debated or critically examined. However, there is some recognition by these faculty that this view of gender might be linked to the "applied" nature of these biological and behavioral courses and that it might be an issue in socio-cultural courses where the subject matter is unrelated to "applied" analyses of factors that affect performance. For example, one faculty member said of gender:

> : I'm not sure, I only know my own area. I'm sure that ... I'm very narrow in my focus at the moment but I'm sure in other areas it would be an issue.
>
> AD: Can you give me an example.
>
> : Sociology.
>
> AD: What about any of the natural science courses?
>
> : Well ... there's differences in growth rates. ...

This example illustrates a commonly held view and indicates that there are differences in the treatment of gender issues in the program that are related to the focus and emphasis of the courses. This recognition, however, is based on this group's views of important knowledge in the curriculum. They do not see gender as important in the "applied" programs' academic core, but are willing to recognize that gender may be an issue for discussion in "socio-cultural" courses which, although part of the curriculum, are peripheral to its "applied" core.

Gender is treated as a separate issue in a couple of "biological and behavioral" courses. It appears on these course outlines in the following ways:

> motor learning as a function of age and sex (in a course on motor development and control)

and

> a consideration of the research findings:
> - team vs individual sports
> - specific activities
> - sex differences
> - participation level
> - program involvement)
> (in a course on physical growth and motor development)

In the classroom, the discussion of sex differences took the following form. The professor began by defining masculinity and femininity by saying:

> masculinity and femininity are defined by aggressiveness and dependency

and continued with the statement that:

> female children may not be socialized into masculine sports or sports that are thought of as more masculine. For example, basketball, rugby and soccer. There are a number of studies that have looked at physical educators. Landers looked at the males and females in physical education and found that masculinity was defined by aggressiveness and femininity by helping behavior.

The professor added:

> behaviors like aggressiveness have biological and sociological aspects. Masculine behaviors are more aggressive whereas feminine ones are less aggressive. But an androgynous person is more well adjusted because they use the appropriate behaviors for specific situations. There have been studies that have looked at women in so called masculine sports, for example basketball, and they have found that women had a conflict between playing in a masculine sport and being female.

This particular discussion of aggressiveness highlights some important aspects of this treatment of gender. It is assumed that when there is evidence of the existences of difference between the sexes these are a problem for women. The solution offered to this problem is that women become androgynous. In other words, they should learn to display both "masculine" and "feminine" behaviors in appropriate situations. This approach does not explicitly frame differences in behavior between the sexes as biological but views them in such a way that women are assumed to be deficient and men normative. The solution is one that is aimed at reducing deficiencies assumed to reside in women in order that they can resolve any potential conflicts that might arise for them between being women and being involved in sport.

A second example of the way in which gender is framed when it is taught as sex differences, is illustrated in the following excerpts from observations of a course on physical growth and motor development. The faculty member described the material in the course dealing with sex differences in the following way:

> it's basically dealing with the same issues – physiological differences, non differences and trying to separate whether problems . . . whether differences are basically genetic or the environment.

The discussion of sex differences in the classes I observed followed this description. The following information was presented to the class. First, the professor raised the question:

> Are sex differences in athletic performance biological or behavioral?

and then went on to say:

> sex differences in athletic performance are largely due to variations in body size, body composition, muscular strength as in androgens vs. estrogens.

The professor continued by asking:

> why are there performance differences between the sexes? .. .. body mass account for the greater percentage of the difference . . . and body size. What else do we have? . . . differences in aerobic performance and muscular strength those are the other two variables.

After a discussion of the extent of the differences between males and females on each of the variables, the professor returned to the question of whether the differences were biological or cultural and concluded that:

> males have high levels of androgens and females have high levels of estrogens and fat. This is important. If the differences are behavioral we have the potential to change, if they are biological we have to accept them. The evidence leans towards the biological but there is a cultural behavioral factor.

In this particular class, sex differences are presented as biological facts, which, although mediated by cultural factors, have to be accepted as natural and, therefore, are subject to a limited potential for change.

The ways in which gender has been framed by the individuals in both of the preceding examples are consistent with the "applied" focus of their courses. In both cases gender is examined as a personal attribute and the focus is on how differences between males and females explain the gap in their performance levels. When sex differences become the focus of attention, important questions are defined as those that determine the cause of the differences and their effects on performance. Thus, it is assumed that differences in biology and behavior between the sexes can explain the gap that exists in their performance. Women's performance capabilities are judged against criteria that are taken as universal and normative and any sex differences that exist are assumed to result from men's natural superiority in terms of strength, endurance and power. When gender is framed in this way it serves to reinforce and reproduce patriarchal assumptions about men's natural superiority.

Gender as a Distributive and Relational Issue

In socio-cultural courses, gender is sometimes defined as an issue of sex inequality. In this approach gender is viewed as a problem of the inequitable distribution of resources, opportunities and experiences in sport between women and men. The treatment of gender as a distributive issue begins with the assumption that inequality is a problem in play, games and sports that needs to be documented and discussed. This view differs from the biological definition of gender as it defines gender as an issue of social inequality rather than as a personal attribute located in individuals. Thus, in this view, play, games and sport are viewed as social practices which are linked to the economic and political forces that create sex inequality in the rest of society.

The move away from biological and behavioral analyses of sex differences is evident in the descriptions of gender that appear in the course outlines of these courses. For example, in a course on Sport in Canadian Society there was the following section:

> Sport and Social Differentiation: socialization into sport as a function of: social class, socio-economic status, role, ethnicity and gender, equality and inequality of opportunity in sport, amateurism and professionalism.

One of the faculty who taught gender as a distributive issue explained why it was an important topic in the course:

> if you've always worked in a world that is mixed with men and women then you can't help but know what the problems are, especially in a field like physical education.

and went on to say:

> well, of course, I feel very strongly that there is an on-going serious problem for women in physical education that has not gone away. I think the biggest problem for me right now is the popular perception that the problem will disappear. We have made many gains but in the process we've lost some of them. What I'm most worried about is that our students coming into physical education don't think that there is a problem.

One of the ways in which this problem is addressed by this professor is to use events that have happened in sport to illustrate that inequality is, and continues to be, a problem for women in sport:

> In my course I deal with the subject and I deal separately with the bit of information there is on women. We do examine the place of women in ancient Greek society ... I will say I do spend more time on women because it is a natural topic. There is a story to tell about women in the Olympics because it's all to do

> with how they came in late and how they had to fight certain things so because of the Olympics being what it is. You can pinpoint it and talk about the attitudes in that way.

The approach taken by this faculty member is explained in the following statement:

> they (the students) should find out there is a problem . . . have so much to teach there isn't time because it is such a serious problem that a great deal of time has to be spent in explaining first of all what the problem is, how it got to be what it is and how they should change it.

The problem is outlined for students using descriptive statistics:

> I thought . . . well the easiest way to handle this is to give them actual information. I will tell them that statistically at the college level we have lost this, this and this . . . it has to be presented so quickly, unfortunately, that I cannot get into the details of exactly how the material was collected . . . so I throw up some transparencies then for about one hour try to present the whole concept of this problem.

This approach to gender moves away from biological and behavioral explanations of differences towards social structural explanations of inequality in sport. This kind of analysis moves away from locating the problem within individuals towards viewing it as a problem that exists within sport and the social fabric of society.

A second way gender is taught in socio-cultural theory courses is by framing it as a set of historically produced, socially constructed, culturally developed power relations between women and men. A faculty member described this approach in the following way:

> The approach I take deals with relational issues, which is the relations between the culturally developed, shared two genders and how that gets realized in distributive issues like the allocation of funds and facilities.

The course outlines for the courses in which gender is taught as a relational issue illustrate the way in which it is framed. For example, in one course gender is taught in the section of the course entitled "Sport and the Social Production of Consciousness." Gender is discussed, in this course, as a part of the topic, "ideology, hegemony and cultural contestation." When gender is framed as a relational issue it is analyzed as an ideological and hegemonic issue rather than one of an inequitable distribution of resources between the sexes. Gender is defined in these courses as a set of socially produced power relations and sport is viewed as a social practice that contributes to, but at the same time challenges, social reproduction and male hegemony.

Typically, gender is introduced in these courses with an analysis and critique of sex differences. After this critique students are presented with an analysis of the ways in which gender categories are socially constructed in society. One faculty member describes his approach in the following way:

> sex gets their attention and that's how I start off this section ... writing sex on the board and talking about biological sex differences. But the only reason we can do that and revert it, if that's the right term, into gender or subvert it as a concept back into gender and show how even biological conceptions themselves are gender based.

Following this, there is often a description of the nature of gender inequality in society and sport, and statistics are used to illustrate the distribution of resources and opportunities in women's and men's sport. This approach begins with an analysis of gender as a biological category, moves to an analysis of gender as a distributive issue, and concludes with an analysis of gender as a socially constructed, culturally produced set of relations. This progression is illustrated in the following statement:

> You find evidence in the appearance of women overall on what appears to be an increasing basis in advertisements. So you take all of that information and then you contrast it to actual data of how many women are occupied in those positions and you find out, that women actually occupy fewer of those jobs than in the 1930s ... so that's what I do I sort of throw out material to generate these responses, then I say O.K. what you just said is a perfect case in point because the data doesn't really reinforce that ... so where are you getting your information from? It's from the cultural mosaic that we're talking about, that's how informed you are by those things ... let's see what's happening, why is this of interest to anybody to create this image.

This view of gender is one that challenges biological and behavioral definitions of sex differences in performance. Students are presented with information that allows them to critique the dominant framework within which gender and sport are typically viewed. The purpose of this kind of analysis is described by a faculty member in the following statement:

> to show that ideas don't occur in a vacuum, that they always occur as an articulation of groups ... social groups.

When gender is taught as a relational issue in socio-cultural courses it is presented within a framework that views sport as a social practice that has been socially constructed in ways that tend to legitimize and reproduce patriarchal social relations. Thus, this view of gender is one that takes on and challenges patriarchal ideology.

Summary

The "applied" focus of the majority of courses in this physical education program provides a framework for analyzing gender that legitimizes male-stream definitions of men's and women's capabilities and presents them as "objective" and representative of reality. This presentation of knowledge about gender is sexist because women are not only defined as different from men, but these differences are explained as the "causes" of women's inabilities to perform as well as men. Women are defined as deficient performers, or, to put it more formally, men are taken as normative and women as deficient. The result is a patriarchal view of the world that sees men as naturally superior to women because of biological and behavioral traits.

This male-stream view is countered in courses in the program that do not have an "applied" focus but, instead, focus on the study of play, games and sports as historically produced, socially constructed cultural forms. In these courses gender is seen as a socially constructed set of power relations between women and men. This view of gender challenges the biological and behavioral determinism presented in male-stream views of gender and provides students with a feminist critique of patriarchy in relation to sports.

Knowledge and Gender: Students' Responses

I will turn now to students' understanding of gender as it developed in the program. They are confronted with two different views, one that reinforces patriarchal definitions of gender and one that challenges these definitions. In order to make sense of students' understanding of gender, their reactions have to be seen in relation to their views of knowledge in physical education.

The dominant view of knowledge is illustrated in the following statement by one of the students in the program:

> psychology I thought was fine and motor development I found O.K. but I found sociology and meanings and values of sports . . . I didn't find that easy. It was in depth and there was a lot of stuff that was new to me. Stuff that I had never really thought about in sport . . . it was just a different type of theory . . . anatomy and physiology you can apply to . . . doing exercises but this stuff. . . .

The dominant view judges the value of courses in relation to a perception of the usefulness of the knowledge being taught. The utility of knowledge is judged by students in relation to its applicability to performance. For example, typical comments from both male and female students were:

> I thought anatomy and physiology was excellent . . . mainly because it was applied to athletic function. Also, I really enjoyed biomechanics, anatomy and physiology . . . I learned the most knowledge than in all my courses . . . for general knowledge that I wanted to know . . . I'd be able to apply it in the field as well . . . finding out so much about the body . . . it was really good.
>
> think the theory courses give you an idea of how the body functions in exercise . . . prevention of sports injuries was very helpful and the physiology courses have been the most applicable for me . . . it relates to what I . . . my job. It gives me the basic understandings.

The pervasiveness of the view that defines important knowledge as that which can be applied to performance is revealed in the following statement about one of the biological and behavioral courses in the program:

> it was tough because I had to study like mad . . . you have to remember a lot of stuff. It's all memorization . . . you've got to learn a million and one things. It's just cram, cram, cram.

Yet, this student went on to say of the course:

> it was great, great course . . . very applied, very specific, very useful.

For this student knowledge that can be applied to performance is important and useful even though it is not particularly enjoyable. For the majority of student informants, "really important" and "useful" knowledge is defined as knowledge from the biological and behavioral courses in the program, knowledge that can be applied to performance, even when this material is viewed as difficult and uninteresting. This view of "important" and "really useful" knowledge is not surprising, given students' reasons for entering this physical education program. All of the students in this study chose physical education because of their love of, and involvements in, sport. The love of sport led these students to physical education because it was perceived as a program that would be interesting, easy, and one that would provide them with "useful" knowledge that could be directly applied to performance. None of the students in the study entered physical education to study play, games and sport as social and cultural practices. They all brought with them notions of physical education that were rooted in practice and focused upon the achievement of performance excellence.

The courses cited by the majority of students as the least valuable in the program were the ones that had no apparent relation to performance, but looked at the historical and contemporary relations between sport and society. Typically, students were confused about the relevance or usefulness of these courses as they appeared to have no apparent application to performance, and they did not see the link between these courses and policy issues. This was the primary reason for their unpopularity:

> well the philosophy of sport, it's so stupid . . . you read all these books . . . one is called The Joy of Sport and it's all on people's ideas of what sport is . . . it's just not very pertinent.
>
> Well it's not meaty stuff . . . it's usually like a trivial pursuit game. It's not that important to the students and it's probably not that important when we get out in the real world and start working . . . it isn't that valuable . . . stuff you can find in a trivial pursuit game.

For the majority of student informants these courses are neither useful nor interesting. They are selected because they are perceived as "easy credits" and, therefore, worth taking as a means of counterbalancing some of the more difficult biological and behavioral courses in the program. Despite being perceived as peripheral or irrelevant, these theory courses are sometimes chosen by students over applied, useful courses because they are thought to be easier and less work than their "really useful" counterparts. Comments were like the following:

> there's biodynamics, which is science, I find the required courses are like that then you have the fill ins like psychology and sociology ... they don't hold my interest

As a result of the tension between students' perceptions of courses as "hard and useful" or "easy and irrelevant," most students select courses that are both "really useful" and "applied" and those that are more general and have no apparent application to performance. Thus, many students select courses that are both consistent with the contradictory to their perceptions of what constitutes important and useful knowledge.

Students' Perspectives on Gender

Students' reactions to knowledge on gender reflect their "applied" orientations to physical education. The treatment of gender as sex differences was the most salient to students. Most students mentioned sex differences when asked if gender was discussed in any of their courses. Typical responses from these informants were:

> sometimes in some courses like for your aerobic capacity and for strength and stuff like that ... the women's pulse rate is dah dah dah whereas the men's is such 'n such ... those kinds of things

and:

> they point to scientific findings, sex differences in performance ... they just sort of present the accepted facts

The students who described gender as biological and behavioral sex differences viewed the information on differences between women and men as "the accepted facts." They viewed men's superior strength, speed and power as a biological fact of life, which is natural and, therefore, unproblematic. Although they do not appear to view sex differences as an area of particular importance, they all explain the fact that male and female students are separated for certain performance courses in the program in terms of biological and behavioral differences that exist between women and men. The following comments illustrate the pervasiveness of this view:

> obviously women can't perform ... obviously women can't do certain things, things that men do.

and:

> I think the only reason they're using males (in studies) is they're always bigger so you're probably going to get better results. If you have a female and a male at the same level and you work them out and test them, the results you get on the

> male will be much better than on the female.

In both cases the students' uses of normative language, "better" and "bigger," to describe differences between women and men reflect an acceptance of malestream definitions that view men as normative and women as deficient.

There were, however, two women in this study who wanted a different approach. One woman commented:

> we did talk on women in sport and women and pregnancy . . . a bit in anatomy, they went over the differences in sex I guess a lot of time is spent talking about the person as a male . . . I haven't really thought about it until now . . . it makes me feel like we're kind of cheated.

The other woman, in a conversation with a friend, said:

> you see that's what pisses me off about the statistics we use in physical education, they are general and all the women that are in physical education deviate standards to begin with. We are all above the norm so why don't we try and get some stats that show us in relation to athletes.

These comments both reflect a dissatisfaction with the way information on gender is presented. For the first woman, the dissatisfaction stems from a recognition that information on men is presented as representative of all experience. Despite this recognition and feeling of being "cheated," she did not elaborate on an alternative presentation of material. The second woman is more explicit about both the roots of her dissatisfaction and possible solutions to remedy this. She is also concerned about the nature of information on women and suggests that courses ought to include more "accurate" data on women. What is clear, however, is that both women feel vaguely demeaned by being identified as women, with a deviant, less able group, and want the information presented in a way that shows them as female athletes, and not as inferior.

Students also said that gender was presented to them as an issue of inequality, but this approach made much less impact. They described it in the following ways:

> . . . about how women have sort of progressed . . . like where we were in Canadian society to start off with and how we sort of progressed . . . we read a few articles on women in sport. Like with history there is always a lecture thrown in here or there about women's rights in sports.

There is a consensus among both the women and men students that equality is not much of a problem and even if it was, things have improved and women are getting closer to achieving full equality in sport. Women students view inequality in relation to their personal experience and define it as a "fact of life" or something that is "not a problem for me." For example, one woman said:

> I don't think about it [equality] an awful lot. Sometimes I think I probably should but I haven't really, it hasn't been a problem for me.

Male students, on the other hand, believe themselves to be egalitarian and fully committed to "treating girls fairly." One man said:

> I'm always encouraging girls, I think girls are great . . . I'm really against people that criticize girls . . . I always encourage girls to do anything they want

and another suggested:

> I think there is equality . . . I think so . . . well I know a woman truck driver so it's definitely getting better for the women.

While most agree that inequality has been a problem for women in society, they maintain it is no longer serious as the problem is being, or already has been, solved. The feeling is that inequality is not a particularly important issue as it does not directly affect performance and, therefore, is not an issue that ought to be focused on in the program. This perspective is more clearly illustrated in the following comment by a male student:

> there are more important, worse things to worry about . . . there's lots of girls in our program, there's equal opportunity . . . I think it's just something they have to talk about in those history type courses 'cause it used to be worse. Now you have girls playing men's sports so what's all the fuss about

These views tie together sex differences and inequality – women are weaker so they don't worry about it, it's simply not a big deal. As one woman explained:

> It might be an idea to make people aware. I think it shouldn't be carried to extremes because I don't think anything can be done to change it. That's just the way people are . . . I don't think men's attitudes will change and the ones who are willing to change are changing now. But it might be an idea to make people aware.

The combination of the location of this information in "non-applied," sociocultural courses and students' views of important knowledge work together to ensure that this information is viewed as unimportant and peripheral.

When gender was discussed as a set of historically produced, socially constructed power relations between women and men, it had very little impact on students in this study. One student described this approach:

> one of the things was semiology and he dealt with that a fair bit and gender discrimination involved in the signs and symbols in society and eventually how it's reflected in sport.

Students found this hard to fathom:

> a lot of people find it off the wall and sort of sit back in their chair, drop their pens and wonder who is this guy. You know, where is he coming from, did he have too much coffee this morning. I don't get the course, I mean I sit there going, "what is that man talking about?"

When they were asked specifically about their reactions to the material on gender, their responses were less damning. For example, one student said:

> well he tried to show through ads how the woman was being exploited from all ... by the male ... I never gave it much thought ... even now I don't think it's ... but I can see his point I think it's valid.

He went on to say how the class reacted:

> probably with the attitude, so what, there are more important things going on in this world ... well, I don't think they were saying it was o.k., but they had some reasons for why it was ... they felt there were worse things. they could make it a strictly made ad....
>
> AD: So do you think the impression is that although things aren't great for women they are getting better?
>
> : Ya that's the impression or if you're a male we're not the ones causing the problem.

One student tried to grapple with the difficulties this approach presented to students:

> there was a reaction ... a lot of people were ... you know ... we've been duped. They couldn't believe that all this was going on underneath ... and at times it seemed like he was reading more into it than there actually was there and it's possible ... but it's certainly an interpretation and you can't argue with that ... people got up and would argue the other way ... like he was mentioning that gender discrimination and male dominance in society is a sociological thing and I remember I argued that it's a biological thing ... we think in such scientific terms that it's difficult to appreciate sociological developments

This approach seems to contradict both the biological and behavioral models taught in most of the courses:

> I have always been brought along in a more science oriented background. It's hard to break away from that ... It's hard to look any other way

and students' deeply held belief that distributive issues are being solved and are no longer a problem:

> a lot of us didn't agree with him. It's too extreme. There;'s equal opportunity here so he's reading too much into it, and, well, that's society.

The focus of the program on "applied" knowledge and students' definitions of important knowledge makes it difficult for them to view physical education in any other way. Thus, students react to material that is contradictory by defining it as peripheral, idiosyncratic and extreme.

Knowledge, Performance and Gender: Some Concluding Comments

In this paper I examine how the structures and forms of knowledge in one physical education program produce messages about gender that potentially reinforce and reproduce patriarchal definitions of men's and women's capabilities. It is too easy to view social reproduction in terms of a simple correspondence between program structure and knowledge, and patriarchal ideology. This paper shows that this is clearly not the case. First, the program is structured to provide students with alternative frameworks for analyzing and presenting information about gender. The dominant framework in the program uses male-stream knowledge from the biological and behavioral sciences to analyse human physical performance. In this framework, gender is viewed as differences: explained in terms of individual biological and behavioral traits in which women are inferior. This approach focuses on individuals and explains gender in these terms. Thus, the dominant view is one that presents male-stream knowledge as "objective" and universal, which provides students with analyses of gender that see men as normative and women as deficient. In other words, the dominant view presents data on gender in a framework that establishes that women are not only different, but are inferior to men as a result of biological and behavioral traits.

The male-stream view of women's inferiority is countered by an alternative one. There are courses in this program that challenge the biological and behavioral determinism inherent in the dominant male-stream, "objectivist" analyses of gender. In these courses gender is treated as a social issue rather than as a personal trouble and is analyzed in a framework that locates gender inequality in the social relations of play, games and sport rather than in biological and behavioral differences between the sexes. Thus, in this particular program students are presented with knowledge that both legitimizes and challenges patriarchal ideology.

Secondly, it is clear from student's responses to knowledge about gender that they do not simply accept everything they are being taught. The process of social reproduction is more complex than a simple relationship between the presentation of knowledge and students' passive acceptance. Students reject knowledge that is not useful for their own purposes. Potentially emancipatory and transformative knowledge is rejected by students because they have difficulty understanding its relevance and applicability. The power of the discourses of science, the occupational and economic demands that exist in society, and students' strong vocational and performance orientations mean they define important knowledge as knowledge that can be applied directly to performance. An acceptance of this view of "really useful" knowledge ensures that gender remains defined as a personal trouble rather than a social issue for the majority of students.

If we are to understand how male-stream knowledge is able to successfully define reality, it is important to understand the complex ways in which male hegemony neutralizes alternative accounts of the world and diverts potential challenges to it. The inclusion of knowledge in the curriculum which challenges patriarchal ideological messages is important but it is not enough. It would appear that alternatives to male-stream definitions of gender are marginalized and treated as peripheral to the "real" knowledge in the academic core of this physical education program. Unless male-stream knowledge is challenged in "applied" and "really useful" courses in the program, it is unlikely that students will be responsive to it. The effort must be to teach gender in performance oriented biological behavioral courses in different, non-sexist ways. I believe this might be one place to start to challenge patriarchal ideology within physical education.

I am convinced that it is important that analyses of the social reproduction of gender in education begin to examine this process in ways that are sensitive to the complexities of the relations between knowledge, structure and human agency. Feminist research that allows us to understand this relationship more clearly will move us towards the development of non-sexist educational practices that will transform male-stream knowledge and allow the achievement of equality for all.

Notes

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Women and Education Conference in Vancouver, Canada, June 13-16, 1986. I would like to thank Jane Gaskell for her helpful comments and criticisms of earlier drafts.

[2] This means interviewing is based on a commitment to foster a non-hierarchical relationship between the researcher and individuals in the research (see Mies, 1983; Oakley, 1981). Feminist research methodology assumes that the development of an egalitarian relationship between the researcher and participants in the research setting is crucial if researchers are to view the social world from the standpoints of the people who are actively engaged in its production and reproduction. The role of feminist researchers is to allow women and men to describe reality in their own terms and in relation to their own experiences. This can only come about through the development of trust, and a sharing of experiences between the researcher and the individuals in the study.

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12

Feminism, Women's Studies and the New Academic Freedom

Thelma McCormack

In recent years a significant number of qualified academic women in Canada have been denied tenure, promotion or have simply not been hired when vacancies were available. Marylee Stephenson at McMaster (tenure), Joan McFarland at St. Thomas Moore (promotion), Angela Myles at St. Francis Xavier, (tenure; eventually reversed) Sheila McIntyre at Queen's (harassment) are among the more familiar cases (*CAUT Bulletin ACPU*, Jan. 1987; Marsden, 1984; Day, 1973). Feminists scholars have responded to this on an individual, case-by-case basis – mobilizing professional support, soliciting funds for legal costs and other kinds of assistance to the person involved. But the cases taken together constitute a record of systemic discrimination, not the random prejudices of particular individuals; they are evidence of institutionalized sexism in academe. Just as barriers to women exist in other sectors of the economy, so too do they in universities.

However, there is one big difference between the economic and cultural sectors. The university women cited above were penalized because of their identification with feminist scholarship, their scholarly publications in feminist journals or because of their critiques of sexist knowledge in the classroom. These practices which are cited by colleagues and administrators as damaging evidence of less competence or lower professional standards reflect the convictions, the intellectual choices made by women as they contest the criteria of academic excellence established by men. The issue then is not an unfair labour practice or grievance. The issue is academic freedom.

Women's Studies Programs and our colleagues who teach in them as well as feminists in other departments of the universities are endangered externally by a neoconservative political culture, by conservative think-tanks like the Fraser Institute in Vancouver and by the backlash among women reflected in conservative Women's organizations. They are threatened internally by cutbacks, underfunding, scarce resources, and the conventional reflexes of university senates and academic policy and planning committees. The modern university is not innovative. In general, it regards Women's Studies and feminist scholars the way modern medicine regards folk medicine and barefoot doctors.

Our case, then, must be a strong one, a legally and normatively compelling one based on something more persuasive than fashion, popularity among

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students or demand from community agencies. I am going to suggest here that case can be made on the principle of academic freedom, or to put it less defensively, that a case can be made that a Women's Studies Program is a test of a university's commitment to academic freedom.

Feminists have been reluctant, I think, to develop their entitlement on that basis because of confusion about the meaning of civil liberties. They have taken a 19th-century model of civil liberties and, not surprisingly, found it inadequate to their position within 20th-century social structure. This has led, in some instances, to a serious schism between feminists and civil libertarians, a situation that does both of them more harm than good. In any case, I am going to suggest here a feminist approach to civil liberties – and, in this instance, freedom of expression which is applicable to our university-based programs in women's studies and to women who teach in them. This new approach is based on what I have elsewhere called "affirmative access."(McCormack 1984a). By access, I mean the right to speak and be heard in a discourse that is your own, to define an agenda and set priorities and to set standards of performance.

First, I am going to comment on the emergence of Women's Studies within the university framework, and I am going to suggest why it is inevitably a precarious relationship. Following that, I am going to discuss the classical civil libertarian theory and tradition based on an 18th-century concept of *dissent* and a 19th-century concept of a *marketplace of ideas*. I will indicate the problems that have developed with this doctrine in the 20th-century democratic state and capitalist economy. I am going to look at two ideas that have been widely discussed in contemporary social theory: (1) the distinction between state and society or between political freedom and social tolerance; and (2) new forms of censorship based on the economics of the media and the rigidities of communication bureaucracies. Next, I will look at the new bases of civil libertarianism; in particular, the science and social capital model. The social capital model has, I am going to suggest, strengthened the position of women in universities but undermines a feminist approach to knowledge. I will contrast the social capital model with the social movement approach of the Women's Movement. Finally in the last section, I will indicate the meaning of a university-based Women's Studies program.

In short, I'm going to suggest that the best safeguard for a Women's Studies program and the feminists who are connected with it is the traditional commitment of the university to academic freedom – that is, to the right of dissent and to the marketplace of ideas. But by using Feminist Studies as an example, we can see the necessity of extending the meaning of academic freedom to include the right of women to have access to knowledge about themselves, to participate in the creation and transmission of knowledge, and to build a cumulative body of knowledge in accord with a feminist agenda.

I

Universities were built by men and for men. Men were the students, teachers, administrators and governors. During most of the 19th century women were excluded from the classrooms, studios, libraries and laboratories on the grounds that higher education was detrimental to a woman's health and could lead to various reproductive disorders. By being shut out of the system as students, women were automatically excluded as faculty and as researchers.

The history of how women eventually broke through the university barrier is different in different countries and even in different parts of our own. In some instances, the universities needed women more than women needed universities; in others, women had to wheedle or force their way in, and, in still others women created separate elite institutions. But when they were admitted to the older, established universities, the institution itself scarcely changed to accommodate them. As token-women, women were permitted to study or teach on condition they would not ask for changes or special privileges.

The transformation of the university from "no women" to "token women," from "token women" to the segregation of women in some faculties, from segregated female enrollment to affirmative action and equal opportunity is far from complete. Women are still over-represented in the Humanities and under- represented in Mathematics and the Sciences, a pattern that reflects all too well the division of labour in the larger society. The mature, part-time students who are our new and most challenging constituency are still marginalized and expected, in most cases, to adapt to an institution designed for younger and full-time students. The quantitative progress that has been made by undergraduate women who now obtain just over 50% of first-degrees is not matched by women on faculty where we continue to hover at about the 16%. Patronizing stereotypes persist of women as less serious students than men, yet also as "overachievers,", as students looking for husbands, yet as women unable to hold onto the ones they have. Women faculty are regarded by some as deviant, undersexed and oversexed, neglectful mothers and smothering mothers, virgins and whores. Nevertheless, since the end of World War II and particularly since the 1960s when women began to enter the labour force again in large numbers, a major step toward integrating women into universities has been taken and is not likely to be reversed. It will be strained by the economy with its chronic fiscal crises, it will be under pressure by pronatalist policies, but there are too many benefits to both universities and women for a return to the Victorian model.

In response to the Women's Movement as a political force, universities began, under pressure, to revise curricula and recognize Women's Studies as a legitimate area of instruction and concentration. Not all universities have such programs, and they have been easier to establish in places where there has been a tradition of interdisciplinary studies and special programs as Canadian studies, Native Studies, Latin American Studies and others. The courses included depend very much on the interests of female faculty who are prepared to teach them and, as is often the case, committed enough to teach them on overload, but the degree requirement pattern tends to follow the university's legislation on the number and distribution of courses. Some of these may be a hardship for women who may need a different timetable. Indeed, the difficulties may be more fundamental, for as Tancred-Sheriff (1987) has suggested, the bureaucratic organization of a university is itself alienating to women.

We – both faculty and students – have, then, a dual obligation: to develop new knowledge, and to demonstrate the alternative to patriarchal knowledge and patriarchal education. Many of us are still uncertain about where this is leading, so that under the very best of circumstances our task is unfinished. At this stage, we are "the other" teaching "the other" and counting on that process to lead us out of the desert.

Opposition to the creation of Women's Studies Programs comes from both administrators and faculty in older disciplines. The courses are perceived as biased, as too easy, and as advocacy rather than reflection "or, the same thing in a more subtle language: overspecialized, too flexible and therapeutic". To approve such a program is to compromise the university's prestige and reputation for excellence. And, in any case, it would be better if the courses were incorporated within departments so that they would be accessible to more students. Whatever the reasons, there is an implicit denial of feminist scholarship as an independent body of knowledge with its own criteria of excellence and its own expertise.

Male administrators are often more pragmatic than male faculty, and are willing to try out for a limited time and on an experimental basis a program which, they tell you with great candour, their wives would never take but their daughters might. But rather than face a confrontation and rather than lose some of the soft money circulating through the system for special programs, they give it their support, waiting to see how the fiscal and ideological winds blow the next time it comes up for renewal. But these men who are more opportunistic than progressive are in the minority, for, as Lorna Marsden (1985) learned in her experience as a senior administrator at the University of Toronto, a university is a culture, not a system: it is governed by tradition not rules. And those traditions are, at best, paternalistic, at worst, sexist (Tancred-Sheriff, 1987).

All of us who have been involved in developing programs in women's studies have been shocked at some point by the depth of prejudice among our male colleagues. Men whom we have trusted, men with whom we have worked closely, men who would not harass a student sexually, men who march for peace, boycott goods from South Africa, support Human Rights, men whose bumper stickers reveal an impeccable record for support of all the right causes – the same men are capable of telling women students that a degree in Women's Studies is worth nothing, that students can help the Women's Movement more by competing with men in the same classes, that they (men) have more insight into women because they are men, that women faculty who teach the courses are less qualified, emotionally unstable, professional failures. This combination of lies, misinformation, male hysteria and irresponsible labelling is dismissed as part of "university politics." Failure to appreciate it is further evidence that we have no sense of humour. None of us who have been through this ordeal will be the same after having witnessed the way our male colleagues manipulated the anxieties of women students about achievement and recognition. The "macho" syndrome has a pathological dimension to it that is not well understood. Is it just a question of a loss of power, or is there some latent anxiety about sexual identity?

Our experience in bringing these programs into being has been politicizing for us, and the strategy has had to be a political one. But we have also observed how quickly some of the feminist scholars became career-feminists co-opted by the administration, accommodating to its male-centered ethos and carving out sinecures for themselves. We need to keep in mind, then, that we are part of a historical struggle. one. And that our relationship to the university is essentially a dialectical one. The President's office may help us; the faculty association may support us, but ultimately, we are as a group unified by our interests in scholarship and our identity with a social movement that symbolizes more about human freedom than a university can deliver. We are not just a group of courses with nonsexist pronouns, not just another new program that progressive universities like to float; we are a visible reminder of the myth of value-free, objective knowledge. Thus, we are the only ones who can make our own case. We represent a test of academic freedom which universities ought to test periodically on their own, and we represent a test of it in feminist terms – that is, the right of affirmative access.

Canadian feminists have led the way in developing university-based programs in Women's Studies. British universities have situated them in the interstices of their university system such as the open college, while U.S. universities have more often developed research institutes where a number of universities form a consortium (Wartenbeg, 1986). We have, therefore, a special responsibility to women elsewhere who are trying to build the same model into their own universities. And beyond that to the secondary schools and community college, and beyond even that to the study groups, libraries, unions and resource centres. In short, a women's studies program is always going to be a thorn in the side of established educational institutions. For while it shares the vision of all scholarly institutions to know and understand human experience, to carry out research ethically and responsibly, it is, ultimately, a critique of how these institutions operate and how knowledge is presented as "objective"; feminist education has its own vision of an alternate nonpatriarchal system and knowledge. Accordingly, we will never be free of tension within the university. Whether we like it or not we will have to continue to make our case. But each time we do we revitalize the meaning of academic freedom as an instrument of change in a stratified society.

II

1. *"Dissent" and the "Marketplace of Ideas": Foundations of Freedom*

of Expression. Section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms says that everyone "has the following freedoms:"

> freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression including the freedom of the press and other media of communication.

This declaration is the culmination of three hundred years of struggle by parliaments, legislatures, social movements and others, to establish the sovereignty of citizens. Behind it are Britain's 17th-century conflicts over religious freedom, the 18th-century revolutions in France and America. Although we no longer have the 18th-century's confidence in Reason and the rationality of human nature, we have inherited and value its principle that a free society is characterized by the legal protection it affords dissidents, the nonconformists. Beliefs in civil liberties and the right of minority dissent is the foundations, democracy; without them the most humane and culturally sophisticated nation may become a closed Stalinist state with all the implications of police surveillance, intimidation, censorship, exile and prisons.

Nevertheless, the status of civil liberties is always, at any time in history, problematic; there are good, plausible, convincing reasons for suspending them. National security, the erosion of the moral fibre of the society, the imagined harm done to persons – these and other reasons provide rationalizations for individuals or a group in power to cut off debate and the free exchange of information. The use of the War Measures Act during the FLQ Crisis in Quebec is an unpleasant reminder of how simple it is for a government to define a situation as a "crisis" which justifies the suspension of basic rights, and how easily citizens are convinced that, under the circumstances, this is, however regrettable, a necessary response. What distinguishes a democracy, then, is a willingness to take risks, to err on the side of freedom and a concomitant distrust of law-and-order measures which can become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The right of dissent is as important today as it was in the 18th century. Liberal educators have refined it further by insisting that dissenting is a learned process, a form of education which begins in the kindergarten. It is not sufficient to teach children how to reason, how to apply the rules of logic; they must also learn through the classroom experience the tough habits of debate, of listening with respect to the views of others which may be diametrically opposed, of having an opinion and expressing it without fear of group pressure, to resist what John Stuart Mill and Hariette Taylor Mill called "the tyranny of the majority." The theory, so persuasively argued by the Mills and, in the 20th century, by John Dewey and other progressive educators, was that democracy begins in the classroom where children can grow intellectually through the exposure to unorthodox ideas and learn to discriminate among them. The enemy of the free society, the Mills had claimed, was self-censorship.

But in the 20th century, we have learned that intimidation and self-censorship are only part of the problem; fear and emotional insecurity may also be conducive to over-conformity and uncritical deference to authority. Hence the importance of not only intellectual development but psychological maturity, too, is the outcome of the social learning that takes place informally in the home, classroom, and community environments.

The second concept basic to our historic tradition of civil liberties is the free marketplace of ideas. All ideas, Mill argues in *On Liberty*, have *some* truth to them, but are partial and incomplete; accordingly, we can only discover the broader, more inclusive truths by having available through our educational systems and media of communication the wide possible array of dissimilar ideas. In that way we would become aware of the large spectrum and diverse points of view, and better understand the limitations of a narrower, particular set (Mill, 1956), Karl Mannheim (1940), one of the major theorists in the modern "sociology of knowledge," took the same view in *Ideology and Utopia* where he indicated that even these more comprehensive truths will be provisional and subject to future correction. Thus the marketplace of ideas itself is always in a process of change.

The constraints on the marketplace of ideas are many, (some of which I will discuss later), but with all its difficulties and limitations "the marketplace of ideas" remains a test of academic freedom, and like the right of dissent it is one of the key ideas of modern civil liberties.

Both of these ideas, then, the right of dissent and the marketplace of ideas are part of our Canadian history and part of our Anglo-American liberal juridical tradition. But although these ideas remain central to a democratic ideology, modern scholarship in the social sciences has forced us to look at them more critically.

2. *Political Freedom and Social Tolerance*. Contemporary political theory makes a distinction between the state and society, between a violation of freedom of speech (or expression) and cultural intolerance; or more specifically, between a *totalitarian state* and an *authoritarian society*. What we have learned from our studies in political sociology is that political freedom may be undermined, not only by the actions of a tyrannical arbitrary government, but by the more diffuse intolerance of mass society. Nazi Germany is the classic example of how generalized anxieties could be manipulated and displaced, converted into scapegoating (persecution of Jews) and demands for law-and-order; the scapegoating became the Holocaust while the demands for law-and-order became the total police state.

3. *The Social Psychology of Cultural Repression and Intolerance*. On the micro-level we have a considerable body of empirical research on intolerance (McCloskey and Brill, 1983; Nunn et. al., 1978). We know what its social and psychological correlates are, how it functions in the larger social matrix, whether it is learned behaviour or a reaction to status discrepancies. Recent studies of attitudes toward abortion have confirmed this earlier knowledge (Luker, 1984; Petchesky, 1984).

The macro studies of authoritarian societies and totalitarian states indicate the connection between state and society. The modern dictator requires a managed consent that comes out of socialization and an educational system which emphasizes conformity and leadership, while the modern authoritarians want more and more political repression, the power to punish and limit our access to what is perceived by them to be anarchy. In short, we cannot have political censorship without a "chilling effect" on the sciences, and we cannot have cultural censorship (of the arts) without also inhibiting political statements.

Feminism is a case in point. To the extent that it is a radical ideology which challenges a gendered power structure, it requires political liberty guaranteed by the Charter; to the extent that it is a form of cultural liberation, it requires a high level of social tolerance in the day-to-day life of the society. Thus, we can distinguish the two concepts analytically, but in reality they are inseparable, and together constitute a system of social control.

4. *Modernization and the Origins of Anxiety*. We have also learned in our troubled age that the hope of social theorists and philosophers at the beginning of this century that modernization would lead us toward enlightenment, away from the older forms of cultural bigotry and narrow-mindedness, from the closed mind and dogmatic mind-set is only partly justified. Patriarchy which we assumed would fade from history because the nature of authority itself was being transformed has persisted. Far from disappearing, it has become modernized, while modernization seems to generate its own psychological anxieties which can escalate into a backlash against what is perceived as permissive, as too much freedom. We are seeing some of this distrust in the current efforts to restore capital punishment and other kinds of punitive measures against criminals and social deviants. The term sometimes used for this is a "moral panic" while the term "moral majority" has come to summarize a pattern of certitude, self-righteousness and paranoia, a pattern that endangers both a liberal culture and liberal state, and, in so doing destablizes a liberal educational system which depends on both.

In summary then, our thinking about feminism and civil liberties must take into account the distinction between the state and society, and the extent to which the fate of modern feminism depends on both political and cultural freedom. These, in turn, are reflected in a university environment and impinge on Women's Studies programs. In addition, as noted, modern societies carry within them a potential for cultural repression which endangers social policies unless they are secured by institutional organization and legitimation. If feminism is a theory discussed in a classroom but there is no Women's Studies program, feminism may disappear from the curriculum in a few short years, as a passing fad which depended on a few individuals who wanted to give the course (Lila, 1986).

5. *Economic censorship*. The second problem concerns the marketplace of ideas. In our capitalist democracies, a true marketplace of ideas is distorted by the marketplace itself where, chiefly because of the profit motive, we have a commercial culture that is repetitious rather than competitive, a culture that is, at best, highly entertaining and diverting but seldom challenging to our minds.

Our publishers (branch plant or Canadian), our broadcast media (private or public) our films (Hollywood or Montreal), our newspapers and periodicals must be popular enough and non-controversial enough to appeal to large audiences of consumers. The result is an ideologically bland, market-oriented culture that rarely juxtaposes major systems of thought and reduces anything that is truly radical to a personal eccentricity.

In the past, when the technology was simpler, and the initial investment required to start a newspaper or magazine was smaller, corrections could be made to an unbalanced marketplace of ideas. Social movements and protest groups could reach large numbers of citizens. Today, however, that is not the case. The high technology involved in publishing a newspaper or magazine, organizing an art show, owning a broadcasting license excludes the small grass-roots group from participating and offering its own construction of reality. In effect, any kind of radical, subversive or oppositional culture on a large scale is impossible except on the campuses.

Modern censorship in the Western capitalist democracies, then, is primarily economic. Canadians have had so many inquiries, commissions and task forces on the economics of our communications systems, we have so much evidence of a concentration of ownership and monopolistic competition, we have such a plethora of information on the prohibitive costs of starting alternative media that the subject hardly merits comment. Suffice it to say that these economic trends which reduce media competition are worldwide. Without some kind of government assistance to critical and creative groups, there is no way they can be heard in any public forum.

Traditional civil libertarians have looked upon any kind of government support with distrust; any measure to sponsor or fund left-of-centre groups so that their voices could be heard or their message disseminated is viewed as a dangerous precedent. But this anti-statism is no longer appropriate or part of the civil libertarian philosophy except on the extreme Right. In Canada we have had a long history of government support of radio and television networks that would reflect the two major language groups and give the country as a whole, through information and entertainment, a sense of national identity. Subsidies to feminists are well within this tradition (McCormack, 1983).

6. *Organizational censorship*. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is our chief example of how the state can offer what the private sector is unable or unwilling to do. Yet, there is a fly in this ointment, too, for public bureaucracies, like the CBC, develop their own internal resistances to change, inflexibilities which make them less and less responsive to changes taking place in the larger social structure. Although the Corporation has attempted to increase the number of women in the organization, and has made a serious effort to eliminate sex-stereotypes in its broadcasting, there has been no acknowledgement of feminism as a social movement in its programming. There are no prime-time TV shows to which we can turn and find an image of ourselves, no radio talk shows that we control. Feminists are ignored; their ideas

are misrepresented; and their politics are trivialized. If our only source of insight or self knowledge was the public broadcasting system, Canadian feminists would know more about American feminists than they do about their own movement and absolutely nothing about European or Third World feminists.

Similarly, universities turn in on themselves becoming isolated from the structural transformations taking place in the larger social system. They, too, become more closed, less adventurous, and imaginative, more protective of existing knowledge and existing standards. One way or another, the university becomes self-censoring without intending to be. The effect is to limit diversity and contain any serious discordant philosophy from appearing and becoming available to students. The modern secular and publicly-funded university seldom become monolithic in its intellectual orientations, but within its diversity, the courses offered are biased. The freedom to challenge the bias is necessary but not sufficient.

To summarize, then, the problems of freedom of expression in modern democracies tend to be social intolerance more often than overt political repression. The major structural forms of censorship are economic (the profit motive and a capital intensive technology) and organizational (unresponsive bureaucratic structures). For feminists living in a conservative political culture this means a renewed attack on feminist objectives of equality and self-determination, a condemnation of anything that deviates from the traditional model of the family and the division of labour, an attempt to take control over all forms of sexuality including sex education in the secondary schools, the rights of homosexuals and reproductive rights. It means, too, that feminists are seldom heard or seen. Except for small pockets here and there, they continue to be invisible either because they lack the resources to publish and distribute their own work or because the public system has failed them. The arm's length relationship has become increasingly the distance between the cultural agencies and the public rather than the cultural agencies and the government of the day (McCormack, 1984b).

7. *Freedom of Expression, Social Capital and the Entitlement of Women to Education.* Many critics of the traditional civil libertarian philosophy have been dissatisfied with its individuals and a theory of rights which adhere in the individual. Scientists, for example, object to the policies of secrecy or classification of documents because they interfere with their work. They are, in effect, saying that freedom of expression is a right of a *group*, a community of scholars who are engaged in research. They have also made scientific freedom a test of a free society.

Closely related to this is the idea that has had considerable influence in educational circles of "human capital." It is based on the notion that knowledge and the arts constitute a form of wealth belonging to the community. In a dissenting opinion in an obscenity case, the late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Mr. Bora Laskin, wrote:

> We espouse this freedom (of expression) because of a conviction, supported by experience, that individual creativity, whether in the arts or in the humanities of science or in technology constitutes our social capital .... (Regina V. Cameron, 1966:305).

The idea of social capital was adapted from the economists' notion of human capital, a form of economic analysis that examined, for example, the value to the economy of investment in education. As Laskin suggests, creativity is, like good health and education, a form of capital. The levels can be raised or lowered depending on our willingness as a society to invest in those factors which contribute to them. But it is not only the individual who benefits through higher earnings from being healthy and well educated; the family, community and society benefit as well. Freedom of expression, then, was a necessary condition, part of a cultural environment to maximize creativity which would increase the productivity of artists and scholars and improve the quality of the cumulative work.

But although the concept of social capital was important and marks an historical transition from an individualistic to a group model, and from person to process, it is also a limited one, and, from a feminist perspective, a flawed one. On the one hand it was a strong argument for the education of *all* women, "gifted" or not. It opened the door to adult education of women as a social rhetoric of social capital theory. But from a feminist perspective, it gives women access to education without questioning the education – its content and form – itself.

For example, the extent to which a wife's education contributes to family income is irrelevant if the nuclear family and the traditional division of labour are themselves being questioned by women. Moreover, if women do not have the same access to health services, education and leisure as men, the results may raise the floor under poverty but widen the gap between women and men. Finally, if the nature of the wealth being produced is misogynist, women may have very little identification with it and see no reason why their earnings should support the intellectuals, scientists and artists who produce it. Thus, they have been brought into the system, but the system is itself depoliticizing and alienating.

These criticisms of the human capital/social capital approach are oversimplified, but are intended to clarify the alternate route which feminists may take in establishing the case of women's studies as academic freedom. As women and feminists, we constitute a social movement, not a demographic category, and it is as a social movement with a particular theoretical perspective that we confront the university. As students and educators we have one foot in scholarship and one foot in activism.

III

The modern meaning of academic freedom is access (Barron, 1973). It goes beyond the freedom to disagree, to challenge the orthodoxies of the lecturer or the text. Liberation from a colonial mentality is, as Quebecois have been trying to tell us, the right to speak and think in our own language, the right to construct and follow our own agenda. Thus, if it comes to a budget choice between Women's Studies and Computer Science, the former has a preferential entitlement. The preference need not carry any instrumental value ("What can you do with the degree?"), nor is it related to numbers. The fact that the number of students enrolled full time is small does not justify the worst classrooms at the worst times.

Second, academic freedom means control. Men should not be invited to teach or supervise dissertations; nor should they be involved in the policy-making processes. There is an important message in this, for there are students who describe themselves as feminists but who still want the approval of male faculty. And there is a new male intellectual on the scene who is interested in feminist studies – usually as a subset of something else such as Marxism, phenomenology, critical theory, etc. – who wants to be affiliated with the program. These men typically see Women's Studies as an intellectual challenge and themselves as "good guys." They do not comprehend that what informs Women's Studies – the content as well as teaching style – is an element of praxis and the subjectivity of being an insider. Men are not, therefore, excluded on some vindictive basis or because they are taking jobs from women, but on academic grounds: gender is the crux of our inquiry. Even "good guys" do not understand the ethos of the movement nor the structure. But in addition, they create a false legitimation of it as if women scholars needed their imprimatur.

Third, academic freedom means the right to determine standards and performance. One of the major findings of the new feminist scholarship is the extent to which women have been judged by male standards, by norms standardized on male populations, by the male gatekeepers of professional journals and granting agencies. This has led to a certain overreaction on the part of women academics who insist upon the recognition of female norms which may be as inadequate as the male standards. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on women who set the performance standards, to insist with their Senates that the standards being used are those of the larger community of feminist scholars and are not personal. Networking with other feminist programs in other universities, our journals, our annual CRIAW (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women) conferences, our five Distinguished Chairs all contribute to our validations.

To summarize, then, Women's Studies is a new branch of knowledge that is being created by feminist scholars. Like other branches of scholarship, it is a discipline so that merely being a women is not sufficient background to participate. Similarly, being a victim and having an empathetic understanding for victims is not a qualification for the academic dimension of the program. For better or worse, Women's Studies is an academic program which is housed within academic institutions. But while we accept some of the organizational constraints of this arrangement, it is essential that we test them against the needs of all women students and those in our program in particular, that we keep in mind a model of universities that might have been created by women for women and which only admitted men much later.

The advantage of being located within a university environment is that it has a commitment to academic freedom, but it has, as I have indicated, defined academic freedom in the 19th century sense: that is, the right to dissent and the marketplace of ideas. What I have suggested here is that our modern 20th century meaning of academic freedom includes both of these but adds a third principle: namely, the right of access. The concept of access is partly the result of the scientific model, and partly the result of an understanding of cultural and social rights as constituents of Human Rights. Education is a cultural right, but without access it is meaningless. Hence, the importance attached to accessibility. But accessibility in this context is not simply having the doors open and counting the number of women who complete primary, secondary, and post-secondary education. It involves in a small way a radical restructuring of the multiversity. It is not just the absence of sexist language in our lectures and textbooks, but a positive program which in order to visualize human relations differently experiments with language and forms of communication.

If the background for the older concept of civil liberties was the British struggle for religious freedom and the revolutions in France and America, the background for our modern understanding of civil liberties is the revolution taking place throughout the world for liberation or self-determination, for cultural as well as political autonomy. Gender equality is part of this new aspiration, but gender equality is both a means and an end; it is a means to freeing ourselves from the pathologies of dependency created by centuries of patriarchal social order. Education, then, is a crucial part of this process.

But until recently women who were in men's universities were there, to use an old cliché, more in body than spirit; they were listening but not communicating, and even the listening was selective. I do not believe this has had the severe damage on our self-images and cognitive competence that some of the French feminist theorists claim; we have been strongly influenced, alienated, but not lobotomized by the androcentricity of knowledge (Irigaray, 1985a; 1985b; Marks and de Courtivron, 1981). However, the situation has not, at the same time, contributed to our self-understanding or self-esteem. The Women's Studies program based on feminism, then, is a revolution in education while, at the same time, it is also part of a larger revolution that has led to the concept of liberation. Although it exists, as I've suggested, in a dialectical relationship to the rest of the university, it is this tension that may contribute to the well-being of the university in its humanistic goals.

Magazine writers and the popular media have decided that the Women's Movement is dead either because it achieved what it was supposed to achieve and the time has come now to phase-out, or because what it achieved would have been achieved without it; or because it failed to do anything. I have read these obituaries with a certain amount of amusement, but I think we must also expect that this new benign anti-feminism will have its impact on us. For this reason we must be prepared to defend ourselves as scholars and our work under the rubric of academic freedom, as a part of a social and cultural revolution that is world-wide.

Notes

[1] This has been very apparent in the discussions among feminists on pornography and censorship where the pro-censorship group juxtaposes a 19th century model of civil liberties with a 20th century concept of gender equality. Rather than seeing these as two sides of the same coin, they assume that we must choose between Section 2(b) of the Charter and Section 15. This was the position taken by the Fraser Committee.

[2] Among recent reports are Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media, *The Uncertain Mirror* Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970 (Davey), *Royal Commission on Newspapers*. Ottawa, Supply and Services 1981 (Kent), *Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee* 1982. Department of Communications. Government of Canada. (Applebaum-Herbert) and, most recently, *Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986 (Caplan-Savageau).

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Introduction to Part Four: Beyond Schooling: Adult Education and Training

Most texts on education do not include a section devoted to adults. Commentators persist in assuming that once people leave school they have finished their education. We all know that most of our real " education" takes place outside schools and throughout out lifetime. But even as adults, many people continue to pursue formal educational activities. In 1983, one in every five Canadians 17 and over took at least one course (Devereaux, 1985, p.1). Over three million Canadians, who were not already full-time students, enrolled in organized educational activities – from job-related training to hobby classes.

Adult education and training are particularly important to women, as the Royal Commission on the Status of Women noted almost twenty years ago:

> During the last ten years, a revolutionary change has taken place in education which promises greatly extended opportunities for women. Because of accelerating technological change, learning more than ever before is regarded as a continuing process throughout life. In the past, educational institutions, engrossed in the education of the young, were slow to acknowledge the potential as well as the special problem of adults, while today they are aware of the need to encompass and encourage mature students. Women who have been "only a housewife" and now see a new way of life and women and men whose jobs have been altered or eliminated are taking advantage of a second chance for education. (1970, pp.187-88)

In 1983, 56% of adult learners were women; only 44% were men. Put differently, 21% of all Canadian women versus 17% of all Canadian men attended classes (Devereaux, 1985, p.6).

The growth of adult student enrollment is perhaps nowhere more striking than at the colleges and universities. One way to look at this is to consider part-time enrollment which is largely composed of "mature students." From 1970-71 to 1980-81, the proportion of part-time undergraduate students at Canadian universities grew from 52% of the full-time total to 64%. Moreover, the enrollment of women has far outpaced that of men. In 1970-71, women constituted only 43% of all part-time undergraduates. In 1980-81, they constituted 61%. (CAAE-ICEA, 1982, p.10).

As soon as we begin to talk about "adult students," we face the difficulty of trying to decide who this includes. Even the age of an adult student is in dispute. A case in point is the different definitions used by two recent Canadian surveys. For Devereaux (1985), the adult learner is 17 and over; for the Canadian Association for Adult Education and *Institut Canadien d'Education des Adultes* (1982), he/she is 18 years and over. Educational institutions set different age limits. Some distinguish "mature students" as 25 and over (see, for example, Wilson and Lipenski, 1978). The CEGEPS (*Colleges d'enseignement* *general et professionnel*), identify mature students as 21 years of age and over and having been out of school for two years (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1977).

Problems of identifying what is adult education are more complex when we try to determine what kinds of activities fall within adult education and what kinds can be genuinely called "educational." Some educators identify adult education as non-vocational whereas others identify it as any course, irrespective of content, taken by adults. In part because of the confusion of trying to decide what is vocational and non-vocational, adult educators are increasingly adopting the latter definition (Purvis, 1976, p.14).

Adult education and training imply many different kinds of education, for many purposes, for many people. Students take courses offered by a wide range of organizations: school boards, community centres, community colleges, universities, prisons, employers and private organizations. The kinds of courses that adult students take also vary a great deal – credit, non-credit, part-time, full-time, correspondence. The difficulty of determining what is " adult education" is reflected in the plethora of terms used to describe it: continuing education, university extension, worker's education, lifelong learning (*education permanente*), non-formal education, recurrent education, popular education.

Adult education serves a variety of purposes, but it has had a long history of being concerned with inequality. This preoccupation has been largely confined, however, to class inequality. Most commentators see adult education as a second chance for those who are educationally and socially deprived (e.g., Kidd, 1979: CAAE-ICEA, 1982). More radically, some see it as education that is not constrained by the rigidities and political control of the regular school system (e.g., Frontier College; Freire, 1972). The interest of the adult education community in the working class has not usually been extended to women. In their studies, adult educators have tended to ignore women students, or even to be embarrassed by them since, it is assumed, they are bourgeois housewives, not members of the "working class." Only during the past decade or so have researchers begun to note the special problems that the relationship of adult education to women pose. If adult education can create a second chance, can it create one for women?

The relationship between adult education/training and women is complex; feminists have only begun to explore its implications. As with other educational sectors, their main concern is to understand how power relations between women and men affect educational participation. More specifically, they seek to understand how gender has influenced access to programs, what impact adult education has on women, and what kinds of curriculum content and pedagogy women are exposed to.

Differential Access

Since the early 1970s, feminist researchers have focused on the question of women's and men's differential access to adult education (Scott, 1980; CAAE-ICEA, 1982; McLaren, 1981; Royce, 1978; Jayaweera, 1979; Tittle and Denker, 1980; Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women, 1984). What is of primary concern is the kind of adult education to which women have access.

Within adult education, as elsewhere in society, a sexual division exists. Women and men are distributed differently among the various kinds of courses that are offered. In hobby/craft/recreation courses, 80% of the students are women; in personal development/general interest courses, 66% are women; in academic courses, 56%; and in job-related courses, 39% (Devereaux, 1985, p.25). In so-called " non-vocational" courses, women are the strong majority; in so-called " vocational" courses, they are the minority. In many ways, "vocational" and " non-vocational" courses constitute a dual system that falls largely along gender lines.

The designation of courses as either vocational or non-vocational is, however, quite arbitrary. Someone taking an "academic" or "personal interest " course may be preparing for a future vocation. Such courses may help to prepare women who have not been employed for several years to re-enter the workforce.

Women are less likely, nevertheless, to be in vocational courses because they are less likely to be in jobs where employers will sponsor them. Women's jobs have flat career lines and often less on-the-job education than men's jobs (Wolf & Rosenfeld, 1978). Even when they are in vocational courses, women are less likely to have the fees paid by the employers. Devereaux (1985) found that 56% of men in training, but only 44% of women in training have their courses paid for by their employers.

The level of female enrollment in national training programs is low, and since 1977-78 has declined. Women's share of places in General Industrial Training declined from 28% in 1977-78 to 24% in 1983-84, while their share of spaces in full-time institutional training dropped from 32% to 27%. These figures conceal the actual numbers – which have dropped even more sharply – of women trainees. For instance, in industrial training, the numbers dropped from approximately 19,600 places in 1977-78 to about 8,200 in 1983-84 (Avebury Research and Consulting Limited, 1986, p.41). In general, women constitute about one-quarter to one-third of those enrolled in these federally supported vocational training programs. The proportion of women in apprenticeship programs is much smaller. In 1983-84, only 3.8% of apprentices who began full-time courses under the institutional training program were women (Boothby, 1986, p.17).

Within vocational training itself, gender segregation is strong. A major concern of feminists has been women's lack of participation in traditionally male domains such as construction and computing science. Pierson and Cohen (1984) examined three vocational training programs in Canada under federal legislation between 1937 and 1947. They concluded that the training possibilities for women were severely limited by conceptions of women's social role and fears of female competition for men's jobs. Notions of what is " normal" work for woman remained surprisingly constant during and after the war experience.

Since that period conceptions of women's roles and rights have changed, but women are still confined to specific types of job training. Women continue to have less access than men to most programs, and are concentrated in traditionally female domains.

Under the institutional training program in 1984-85, women made up, for example, 92.9% of the trainees in clerical occupations but only 5.3% of those in construction occupations (CEIC Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1986, Table 4.4, p.72). In his study of women re-entering the labour force and training programs, Boothby (1986) summarizes such sexual divisions:

> Female and male participation in training programs differs greatly. Women are almost entirely absent from apprenticeships, one of the largest and most successful components of training programs. They are also underrepresented in the industrial training program. Under the Institutional training program, they form a high percentage of trainees in educational equivalency courses and general job-skill courses, and a relatively low percentage of those in skill training for specific occupations. Women train largely for typically female occupations, especially clerical occupations, and men for blue-collar occupations. The only blue-collar occupation for which large numbers of women train for is sewing machine operator. (p.19)

To explain women's lack of access to "non-traditional" areas, studies have isolated many factors that work against women and that need to be rectified: inadequate training allowance (especially for those with children), low unemployment insurance benefits (since women earn lower wages on average than men), training in "surplus" occupations (those in which there is an excess supply of labour in local labour markets such as clerical work), scarcity of child care, lack of affirmative action strategies and the need for aggressive recruitment campaigns (Boothby, 1986; Buckland, 1985; CCLOW, 1984; CAAE-ICEA, 1982).

This stress on women's low participation rate in non-traditional training programs is important. Women do need greater access to male-dominated training and occupations. But this analysis begs the question of what is happening in female-dominated occupations. Why are clerical workers, for example, so rarely sponsored by their employers to take courses? A further problem with research on access is that, as noted in Part Two, it places too much stress on women's own deficiencies. It suggests that all women need to do is to improve their personal characteristics and training in order to overcome their low status.

The Impact of Education and Training on Women

Another important strand of feminist research since the early 1970s examines women's experiences as adult students – what it has meant to them and what they have gained. This research has looked at the psychological, social as well as the economic impact.

Many studies that examine the impact of educational experiences on adult women look at women enrolled in university and college programs, and measure psychological impact (Letchworth, 1970; Astin, 1976; Tittle and Denker, 1980; Lovell, 1980). In general, these studies find that most women re-entrants want to change their lives, but are not certain what they want. Many are dissatisfied with the kind of employment they have had, and/or have suffered from breakdowns of marriages, or shifts in their domestic responsibilities (e.g., children going to school or moving away from home). Many return with a sense of personal inadequacy, but with high hopes.

Researchers have also found that women's pursuit of studies is stressful not only psychologically, but socially (Lovell, 1980; Tittle and Denker, 1980). Family members (especially husbands) and friends may not support their endeavours and may even actively countermand them. Because of such stress, almost half of women re-entrants may drop out of their program at least once (Scott, 1980, p.17).

Despite such negative accounts, most studies suggest that women's adult educational experiences are positive. Some indicate that women experience a sense of self-transformation that is akin to consciousness-raising (Lovell, 1980). A major problem of research on women's experiences as students, however, is that it often does not take into account the content and pedagogy of the course that the women take. Do they gain in confidence no matter how the course is taught? What difference would a woman-centred course make?

As a result of adult education experiences, women's self-perceptions may improve a great deal. However, their economical and occupational gains appear to be slight. As Wolpe stresses:

> It is difficult not to fall into the trap of assuming that training schemes, even if they were geared for new types of employment, would be the panacea. If highly trained there is no guarantee that women would be employed. After all the unemployment rate is highest amongst women, and experience has shown that neither the demand for nor the form of women's labour is directly related to their level of training and skill. It is related to a complex set of factors; these include the wage structure, the labour movement as a whole, the nature of the division of labour, the power of the employers and so on. (1980, p.9)

The economic returns of education are lower for women than they are for men, as we pointed out in section 2. This applies to adult education as much as to other forms of education. In her study, Lovell (1980) notes that upon completion of the program, the working-class male students were more likely to pursue higher education than the middle-class female students. Since women tend to enter low-status, feminized jobs, whatever their educational preparation," equality of outcome" in the economic arena eludes their grasp (Tittle & Denker, 1980, p.23). Moreover, McLaren (1985) found that as women increased their investment in education in the 1970s, the economic situation worsened. As a result, many students ended up if not unemployed, underemployed.

The concern about economic outcomes puts into sharp relief the point that without substantial reform in other institutions, many of the benefits of adult education and training cannot be realized.

Whose Knowledge and Whose Pedagogy?

For over a decade, the problem of access to adult education and the evaluation of women's experiences thus have claimed much of the attention of feminists who have examined adult education. More recently, a focus on the content and pedagogy of adult education courses has begun to emerge. This analysis is informed by feminist critiques of other educational sectors (see Part Three), and also by radical adult educators such as Freire (1972). Their approach is concerned with the nature of the knowledge that is transmitted, how it is transmitted, and who it serves. As Spender points out:

> When the aim is to provide women with exactly the same education as men there is an underlying assumption that the male way is the right way, and that one of the solutions to women's oppression lies in having women receive an equal share of the fruits of the ostensibly superior male educational diet . . . Women have played virtually no part in determining the shape and form of education in our society. The models of education were firmly established and were within male control before women began their fight to enter educational institutions. Those models of education are still formulated and controlled by males. (1980, p.20)

Since so many adult students are women, this is particularly important. As Hootsman (1980, p.79) notes: "Adult education is beginning to realize that although for years its participants have been predominantly female, the courses and programs have not adequately met women's needs and aspirations."

Women have been neglected in contemporary theory and practice of adult education (Thompson, 1983; Walker, 1982; Walker, n.d.). Walker (n.d.) finds some "spectacular blind spots" with reference to gender in the knowledge base of adult education and the assumptions that theorists make about adult development, adult learning, labour education, and basic education. She finds that women are underrepresented or misrepresented, and writes:

> In education in general and in adult education too, the hierarchical structure of the discipline and the professional field both reflects and reproduces the general societal picture, with men in the top positions in the departments, associations and agencies; those institutions which control access to the profession, and to the knowledge base whereby it claims professional status as a field or discipline. This discrepancy between representation and control would seem to raise some important questions for a field such as adult education, with its philosophical commitment to education as a means to personal and social change. It raises questions about whose interests are being represented in adult education as it is currently structured, and opens up for examination the question of what an adult education might consist of if it truly represented the interests and perceptions of a majority of its providers and participants. (p.5)

Many feminists argue that adult education has the *potential* to be different (less patriarchal) than other forms of education (Thompson, 1983; Hughes and Kennedy, 1985; Spender, 1980; Jean, 1984). Its rhetoric, at least, is that it is flexible to meet student needs, that it emphasizes personal growth, and that it has non-hierarchical structures. However, for it to meet the interests of all the women it must serve, many changes will have to be made. As Jean (1984, p.106) suggests, when feminists organize the education of adult women, they tend to develop a new type of education: less authoritarian, fairer, and centred on learning rather than on teaching. An important strategy must be for women to demand to be present where decisions are being made (Jean, 1984, p.109).

A feminist approach can make a difference. It can offset the imbalances of traditional curriculum, as Breault (1986) was able to do when she ran a Canadian Jobs Strategy Re-Entry program. It can build on women's strengths and interests and help them to feel more confident at the end of the course, not because conventional feminine roles were confirmed but because their resistance to them was encouraged (Thompson, 1983, p.159).

Such feminist analyses help us to understand not just women's and men's experiences within adult education and training, and not just the role of this educational sector in society. They also help us to see more fully how such powerful structures as gender affect people's lives. Important as the family, compulsory schooling, and wage labour are, other sectors such as adult education and training also contribute to the formation and transformation of sexist and patriarchal societies.

The four contributors to this section on adult education and training explore distinct questions. Rockhill examines a group of women who desire to learn English, but have little access to formal, or even informal instruction. Rockhill focuses on the contradictions involved in women's educational experiences – threat and desire, regulation and rebellion. In contrast to most studies that focus on such obstacles as insufficient institutional support, she looks unflinchingly at the ways in which the power relations between men and women, manifested through sexuality and violence, directly affect women's attitudes towards literacy and participation in such programs.

McLaren looks at a group of women who gained access to a traditional liberal arts college that enrolls only women. In examining the women's experiences and accounts of their life histories, she finds that there was nothing "traditional" in the ways by which the women struggled to become students. Contrary to theories of socialization, the women's accounts do not reflect a passive acceptance of "femininity." By reflecting upon their past, and being in education, the women reveal a courageous capacity to struggle against enormous odds.

While Rockhill and McLaren look at the question of access and what it means to women, Tom and Jackson examine critically the question of content. Jackson provides a critical analysis of "vocational knowledge" and how it has been defined by recent policy initiatives. In particular, she focuses on the new consensus, based on a reconstruction of the functional link between education and needs of the economy, concerning "skills" and "competence." Such a consensus, which harkens back to "Taylorism," is applied especially to occupational training in which women are predominant. Her work points to the ever-present problem of sexist and patriarchal curricula, and policy initiatives that support them. Such systematic bias is not something that is static or has simply existed in the past; it emerges in new ways. In such a context, Jackson's analysis is especially crucial.

Tom provides a first-hand account of what happened to a group of women (all single-parent mothers) who received job training in a government-sponsored program. She provides important insights into the contradictions of a program that is run by women for women, within a labour market structure that promises few opportunities. Though such inconsistencies of government policy have been noted before, few studies have examined their significance for the people involved in the programs. Tom focuses on the meaning the program has for both the trainees and trainers, and what sense they make of their experiences.

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13

Literacy as Threat/Desire: Longing to be SOMEBODY

Kathleen Rockhill

Education can be a highly charged and contradictory experience for women. Whether they actually attend programs or not, the "possibility" of participating – of "going to school" – carries with it images of hope and of fear. Women hope that education can deliver all it promises: that it will provide the means to a different life, a better life – a life in which they can be "somebody."

It is common today for education to be ideologically dressed as the pathway to a new kind of romance for women, the romance of a "career," a profession, a middle-class way of life; the image is one of a well-dressed woman doing "clean" work, important work. As such, it feeds her yearning, her desire, for a way out of the "working class" life she has known (Steedman, 1986). It is precisely because education holds out this promise for women that it also poses a threat to them in their everyday lives. This is especially true for women in heterosexual relationships when their men feel threatened by the images of power (independence and success) attached to education.

For women, education has been a primary site of regulation and of rebellion. The contradictory nature of education in women's lives was portrayed comically in the film, *Educating Rita.* In a rare depiction of how a woman actually *lived* returning to school, we see her turning away from her husband and the working class life she has known as she turns toward her male teacher to learn all that she has ever desired to be – a "lady" educated, cultured. Angered by her changes, Rita's husband burns her books. Much more tragic is the true story of Francine Hughes who, after years of suffering a nightmare of day-in and day-out brutality from her husband, seized upon education as her final site of resistance. Enraged at her for attending school, her husband did not stop at burning her books. Afterwards, Francine recalls, he continued to beat her:

> While he pounded on me, I slumped down, further and further, sinking into the corner. It was the loneliest moment of my life. It wouldn't matter how I yelled and screamed. Nobody would hear me; nobody would help me; nobody cared.
>
> Mickey said, "You dumb, mother-fucking whore, do you still think you're gonna go to school?" I felt my heart and my spirit break. "No, Mickey. I'm

> not gonna go to school." I'd lost. I was beaten, defeated, broken. He said, "Say it three times, whore!" (McNulty, 1981: 181)

Later that night, Francine finally broke out of his reign of terror by burning his and her house to the ground.

Although most of us can cite examples of women who have experienced male violence in connection with educational participation, we know little about how it is lived in women's lives. If violence is broadly defined to include non-physical forms, most women have experienced the threat that their having more education, or intelligence, or ideas of their own, poses for the people they know. In an intriguing study, Marian McMahon's (1986) work on the power of language suggests that, as a woman gains facility in a dominant language and uses it to express her ideas or experience, she is placed in a deeply contradictory bind: her "feminine" identity as a caretaker of others, as responsible for their sense of ego-strength, validity and authority, is disturbed, provoking the violence of those who feel themselves threatened or silenced by the power of her voice.

When violence is more narrowly defined to include male sabotage of educational efforts, whether through physical force or more subtle means, my guess is that a vast number of women are affected. Although systematic studies of women's experience of male resistance to (or support of) their educational efforts have not been undertaken, researchers are beginning to note the relationship (see Horsman, 1987; Ramdas, 1985; Thompson, 1983). As Ramdas stresses, "there must be a clear recognition of the role played by men in preventing women from going out of their homes and gaining access to equal opportunities" (p. 103). As she goes on to argue, women's participation in education must be considered in relation to the lack of control that they have over decision-making in their homes and communities, over money and property, over their bodies or biological processes, over religion, custom or tradition, as well as direct oppression by the men in their lives.

In order to look at how women's participation in education is embedded in the power dynamics between men and women, we need to look at how power operates in the concrete practices of everyday life: the direct opposition of men to women's participation in various forms of schooling; the general forms of male resistance to woman's participation in activities that may challenge her performance of traditional duties, as well as her gendered sexuality; the effect of male violence upon a woman who lives in the daily face of its threat, even if the violence is not explicitly directed against her participation in education programs. At its most fundamental, we need to ask how man's ownership of woman's labour and sexuality, her body and mind, affects her participation in education, and how education poses a threat to that ownership.

In the account that follows, I explore the ways in which education enters into the power relations between men and women. In particular, I look at how gender differences are constituted and constitutive of literacy practices in everyday life. I look at the relationship of literacy to sexuality and to violence, and to the public/private split between the words inhabited by men and women. My focus is upon how literacy is lived in the lives of Hispanic women who know little English. Although the study is based in the U.S., recent research on immigrant women in Canada suggests that this work has considerable relevance here (Das Gupta, 1986; Gannage, 1986; Ng, 1986; Roberts et al., 1987; Silvera, 1983; Skodra, 1987).

The analysis can draw upon a comparison between men and women, but the concentration upon the stories of women provides a basis for interpreting how gendered practices are integral to their understandings of their everyday lives.

Language, Literacy and Learning English

This study is based upon field work conducted in the West Side of Los Angeles from 1978 to 1982 (Rockhill, 1982). The location was chosen because of extensive local community contacts and because of the growing proportion (more than twenty-five percent) of Hispanics living there. While our focus was upon recent immigrants (most of whom are residing illegally in the country) who spoke little English, we interviewed other residents who spoke more English, as well as agency and community workers who were politically committed to working with the Hispanic community. The heart of this account is drawn from life-history interviews with approximately thirty-five Hispanic women, more than half of whom were recent immigrants. In addition to the life histories, we sought detailed descriptions of day-to-day interactions that led to the development of an inventory of situations in which the English language was encountered, and a description of how such situations were handled.

Without exception, the women we interviewed in this portion of the study were working-class, or lived at even more marginal levels of subsistence. Most had completed less than eight years of formal schooling. While the younger women tended to be more highly educated, only one had completed high school and been to university. Most were "economic refugees" from Mexico, and a few came from Guatemala, Columbia and Ecuador. We also interviewed more recent political refugees from Salvador.

The "we" to whom I refer are my co-workers, university students, each of whom is fluent in Spanish and, in various ways, a participant in the local Hispanic community. Whether this effectively compensated for my being non-Hispanic and a very limited speaker of Spanish is difficult to answer. Certainly, it affected the way I worked and the questions I asked. My co-workers played an invaluable "translating role" and were themselves key informants, but the Hispanic women in the community with whom I could directly communicate provided me with my greatest sense of connection, as well as a sharp appreciation for the differences between my life and theirs. I will always regret not having been able to learn Spanish quickly enough to communicate, which painfully taught me how deeply our lives are structured by language *and* how difficult it is to learn, especially when one is absorbed in the multiple demands of daily life and opportunities for practice are limited.

"Illiteracy" is consistently conflated with language difference. Most of those branded as illiterate in the U.S. are not native speakers of English. In one of the first major studies to announce large numbers of adult "functional illiterates" in the U.S. (Adult Learning Project, 1975), 56% of those so classified were Spanish-surnamed. Official U.S. statistics suggest that Hispanic women are the largest single group categorized as "illiterate" (Hunter & Harman, 1979).

The people we interviewed do not directly talk about literacy. Instead they talk about not knowing English and being treated as though they are illiterate or stupid because of this. The women especially express feelings of shame, guilt and frustration at not being able to communicate in English. While both men and women stress the importance of knowing English – "it is of primordial importance" – at the same time they say that they get by OK without it. The general pattern is one of attending English classes soon after arrival and then stopping. If the couple is married, the wife goes with her husband and stops attending when he does. The men often complain about going to school in terms that suggest that they experience it to be demasculinizing: "I didn't like it," Luis explains, "because it made me feel nervous and it's a little embarrassing for a man to feel nervous, no?" In contrast, when the women talk of feeling confused, they tend to blame themselves for not understanding, explaining it in terms of being too preoccupied by family concerns to attend to the task of memorization. For example, Francita describes how her husband enjoyed listening to cassette tapes at night as a way of learning English, but she could not:

> . . . my head was with my children in El Salvador. I heard the cassettes and I didn't understand. I didn't understand anything. . . . I dedicated myself to think of my children. They hadn't written to me, what happened to them? Had they received the checks? All this, I couldn't dedicate myself to learning English.

All but the younger, more highly educated women stop going to classes, although the typical pattern is one of several attempts. Stopping is often precipitated by someone in the family getting sick, a change of work, or of living arrangements. They talk about worry, anxiety, too much on their minds, too much to do, feeling too old to concentrate and yet, express the hope that they will learn English: "God willing, I will learn one day," like a refrain, runs through their interviews. Gladys captures the sentiments of most:

> I am thinking of going to school within the next year. I went a few years ago, but I didn't continue because I had a problem with my eyes. Youth has more capacity to learn. But the mind of the old woman (she is forty-one) has more trouble with it. One thing or another, it's difficult to hold the reins of a house

> and family. And another thing to worry about work and whether there is going to be food and rent. So it appears to me that it is that, as well, the mind, and the words come in one time, but later I don't remember them. But I think that, I am sure that I would learn it perfectly... you always regret it for not going to school, and for not learning....

Whether married or the single head of a household, women are faced with the bulk of the work and emotional support necessary to maintain the family. These responsibilities are especially severe for immigrant women who must often live in combined families for several years after their arrival. In addition, the family they live with is typically that of their husband's parents. As Gannage points out in *Double Day; Double Bind* (1986), because the women must work a double day, there is no space in their lives to pursue actively potential paths of change. She notes that participation in union or educational activities is highly dependent upon knowing English, for which there is also no time.

The bind of the "double day" severely affects the women we interviewed. The issue of space – the lack of space for taking care of or developing oneself – is only partly due to the lack of time in the lives of working women; it is also because our lives are not allowed to take up space. That is to say, we have no space in part because we are seen and see ourselves as having no right to take up space, to put ourselves first, to say, "I want" or "I will." This frame of mind is structured by the day-in and day-out gendered ideological practices that construct us as totally responsible for the well-being of everyone else in the family *and* by the control of the men over our sexuality. In addition to the burdens of worry and double workloads borne by the Hispanic women we interviewed, their lives are structured so that they are confined, except for work or church, to the private sphere of the home. This confinement is a normal, taken-for-granted ritual embedded in the social and cultural practices of everyday life.

Furthermore, for some women, confinement is violently enforced by their husbands. Julia was so frightened of her husband that she spoke to us only once, on that occasion pouring out her story of imposed isolation:

> And there were three things that I wanted, like I wanted to eat: to know how to work, to know how to earn money, to understand what my children spoke in English and to know how to drive. These three things I wanted, like I wanted something to eat. He (husband) said, "No. The women here who work are just like any women and that these do this, here the women are like that, they start going out with others: I want my wife all for myself, not for others."

As was typical for the other women we interviewed, Julia's husband finally let her out of the home to work in order to supplement the family's income. In time, as she began to earn money, she felt strong enough to insist upon taking English classes, but she was terrified that he would make her stop.

As commentators talk about literacy they tend to decontextualize it from the lived realities of everyday life; they divide people into dichotomous categories, "the literate and the illiterate," "the motivated and the unmotivated," or "learners and non-learners." Both men's and women's experiences have been distorted by this ideological practice of violent abstraction. To attribute the experience of Gladys and the other women we interviewed to lack of motivation, to define them as illiterate, non-learners, is to do them a grave injustice.

To overcome this distortion, I have worked from a pluralistic conception of "literacies," looking at speaking, reading and writing practices in everyday life. But, I have also stayed with the symbolic conception of "literacy," and sought to understand what its meaning is in the lives of the women we interviewed. As the excerpt from Gladys' interview quoted in the foregoing reveals, there is a point at which taking classes is no longer conceptualized as learning to speak, read or write English, but as "going to school." It is in this transition, from thinking about acquiring specific literacies, to participation in a process of schooling or education, that literacy becomes symbolically associated with threat and desire.

Contextualizing literacy, breaking it down into literacy and language practices, looking for differences between the experiences of men and women, and seeking to understand how these are related to cultural as well as gender differences, has led me to see three ideas as important to explicating immigrant women's educational experiences. The first idea is that literacy is women's work but not women's right; the second idea is that the acquiring of English is regulated by material, cultural and sexist practices that limit women's access to the "public," confining them to the private sphere of the home; the third idea is that literacy is both threat and desire.

Literacy as Women's Work

By examining the women's everyday lives, we began to see that the women do most of the written work that involves English, whereas men do most of the spoken work. This is related to the confinement of women to the domestic sphere. Literacy becomes an extension of women's household work. This work, like the rest of housework and care for the family, is rendered invisible. Even the women are, by and large, not aware of the extent to which they handle written English as part of their daily chores and family responsibilities.

Women do most of the work of the household. In addition to domestic labour, they attend to most of the household business which involves the purchase of goods, as well as transactions around social services, public utilities, health care and the schooling of children. Most transactions requiring the use of forms are handled by the women. For example, while the husband typically goes to the bank, it is the wife who keeps track of the money. In a detailed inventory of English-language situations in everyday life, women report handling almost all of those which involve the use of the written word. For help, they turn to children, relatives or community workers. They turned to us repeatedly, asking us to assist in deciphering written forms, especially those related to monetary transactions. These transactions involved not only banking, but also employment, health care, major consumer purchases and home maintenance.

In contrast, when women enter the public domain where the English language is spoken, they do so in a variety of situations that do not arise on a regular basis. Shopping is the only exception, but to the extent possible, this is done in local markets where Spanish is spoken. In general, they do not experience frequent, repeated contact in linguistically similar situations, so they cannot learn to speak English through this work. If possible, they go with someone who can help them with English. Yet they do develop some facility in understanding written English, as we learned in the process of helping them fill out forms. We also came to appreciate that literacy is much more than a matter for "filling in the blanks." In a study of health care situations, I describe the complexity of the separate but interlocking social regulatory agencies with which women must be familiar in order to claim eligibility (Rockhill, 1984). Given the politically charged nature of their situations, it is not surprising that they depend upon trusted advocates, either friends or community workers, for assistance.

Our staff talked a lot about what we increasingly noticed as the invisibility of women's literacy in English. In most cases, when asked, wives say that their husbands know more English than they do. When couples are interviewed together, the man agrees that he knows more English. Sometimes further questioning reveals that the wife can read more, but often her greater facility with the written word is unacknowledged. This is not meant to imply that the women's literacy skills in English are good – only that they and their husbands perceive their literacy to be less than it is, and that the wives defer to their husbands as the one who is more competent. It is probably true in literacy situations involving language difference, where the dominant language is also the predominant spoken, official language, that facility with the spoken word has a greater presence than the written word. However, the wife's tendency to defer to the husband as the more proficient one also speaks to power issues between men and women.

My guess is that wives not only present their husbands as more competent, but believe that they are. In contrast with the men, most of the women say that they do not feel very confident in themselves, and talk of feeling ashamed. Several describe how their husbands "call them down," tell them they are stupid, illiterate, even whores; at the same time, they oppose their wives taking classes. Like other women we interviewed, Yolanda had studied English for awhile, but her new husband did not want her to continue her studies. She acquiesced saying, "OK, but one of us needs to study English. You go to school then." In time, he began to drink a lot and go around with other women. "I suffered a lot, many humiliations, too many offences. I remember that often he would tell me that I was illiterate."

Literacy is women's work, but not women's right. They do not experience their lives in terms of rights, but of responsibilities to their family and home. This is reflected in the form in which women tell their life stories. Whereas the men present themselves as public figures, agents of their lives and the subjects of their histories through the experiences they recount, the women talk mostly about their families, the moves of their husbands, concerns for their children, hopes for their futures. The women prefer to learn English through classroom instruction; but the men, not the women, talk about their "right" to learn English. This is especially ironic since it is the men who are much more likely to learn English formally, through exposure to English language situations, whether at work or in other public arenas. In contrast, the women, who depend upon classes to learn the language, experience the greatest difficulties in attending.

The Public/Private Split

Individuals can learn a second language in two ways – either through formal, repeated contact with the spoken language or through formal instruction (Krashen, 1978; Schumann, 1978). Although typically some combination of the two forms is necessary, when one lacks opportunities for informal contact, formal instruction becomes more crucial. The primary reason women give for being unable to learn English is the lack of opportunities to practice. They want to attend classes in order to learn the language in part because they have fewer opportunities to practice spoken English than men have. This has a lot to do with the nature of the work available to them, and their confinement to the home.

Women talk of being afraid to speak in public, ashamed of not knowing English. Men stress the importance of talking, of making themselves understood by whatever means necessary. Men participate in and even control sectors of "the public" in a way that women cannot and do not. Because most public spaces are dominated by the English language, Hispanic men have demarcated spaces (e.g., clubs, restaurants, bars, sports, the neighbourhood where they live) where they establish control and feel free to speak Spanish. Women tend to be excluded from these domains. There are no public places for Hispanic women to congregate. Potential exceptions are churches, parks, community centres or schools, but because these are riddled with all the problems of being in "the public," women meet male opposition, unless participation is in some way directly connected to family business.

Because they do not know enough English to feel that they can defend themselves, the women also express their fear of going out alone. In speaking about their fear, they describe their vulnerability to assault. They live in ghettos, in the heart of high-crime districts which stretch from one end of the city to the other. Like women everywhere, they feel themselves sexually preyed upon. Even if permitted to do so, they will not go out alone, especially not at night, not even to learn English. Moreover, since none of the women interviewed drives, they are dependent upon public transit – in Los Angeles, a very tedious and treacherous system to master even if fluent in English.

This public/private split is (re)constituted by the family. Not only must the women contend with the demands of the home but, because of sanctions against communication with others (Skodra, 1987), they must remain confined to the family as their primary site of interaction. The extended family provides an important source of support, but it is experienced as a highly contradictory support for married women, especially when ties with the husband's family dominate. Most husbands object to their wives going out and discourage them from learning how to drive except to perform the traditional work of women, or to earn money when it is essential to the family's survival. Confinement to the home is not unique to Hispanic women; a similar situation has been documented by research on different populations of immigrant women (Gannage, 1986; Skodra, 1987). As Gannage reports: "Many immigrant women rarely go out without being accompanied by their husbands. A night out with women friends or leisure activity independent from their husbands is unheard of" (p. 65).

Although most of the women have to work for the family to manage economically, the gendered structure of work is constitutive of and reconstitutes the public/private split. The work available to women tends to be an extension of their work at home and does not provide them with the opportunity to learn English in the same way that men can. This is a critical point. Not only do men have access to public spaces in a way that women do not, but this also means that there are some forms of work available to men through which they can learn English, and this is how most learn it. Work situations that involve contact with English-speaking people include construction, small restaurants, stores, and gardening. It is typical for a man to work with friends or relatives for a while who help them learn the ropes and the language, as well as assist them in acquiring loans for the relatively small amount of capital it takes to strike out on their own in these businesses. In Los Angeles, landscaping is especially popular; it requires little investment and is in demand, the year round, especially by the consumer-oriented, fun-loving gringo yuppies.

The range of work options open to women is much more limited. The choices narrow down to domestic or factory work. Unless a domestic worker happens upon a very unusual employer who helps her to learn English, she is confined to the home where she works and often lives in isolation, learning only the few English words that are specific to housework. In the factories, the possibility of learning English is even more bleak. As Ng and Estable (1986) point out, employment practices encourage the formation of "language ghettoes" which limit the possibilities of a woman's acquiring the official language even after years of working. There may be some forced interaction with the supervisor, but the language used on the floor – when it is possible to talk – is Spanish. In most forms of work, talk is restricted. Most of the day is spent in contact with a machine: "Also, as they say, something that doesn't help me out at all on my job is the fact that never do I speak. Only sew, sew, sew. I don't have a chance to talk." So Gladys further elaborates upon her difficulty in learning English.

If a woman does manage to learn some English, she may be promoted to supervisor. As Westwood (1984) documents, this places her in a very uncomfortable position vis-à-vis her co-workers as she must enforce management policies. After promotion to supervisor, Clementina's boss wanted her to learn more English, but she resisted, feeling her separation from her friends and knowing that, no matter how much English she learned, there was no way for her to use it except to further the interests of management, alienating her even more from the women with whom she worked.

Ghettoization is brutally clinched by the heavy use of illegal labour – that is, the hiring of people without documents and paying them deplorably low wages. Also problematic is the quasi-legal status of people on temporary work permits. Lack of full legal status means constant fear of deportation for all. It would be a grave mistake to underestimate its effect for both men and women. With few work options, the responsibility of their children, and vulnerability to sexual abuse, the situation of women without documents is particularly severe. As Silvera's research (1983) reveals, this is especially true of domestic workers who are totally vulnerable to the whims of their employers. Consuelo describes being held captive at the age of fifteen: "her husband was one of those . . . um . . . he began to try to make me fall in love with him. . . ."

In their process of immigration, many of the single women we interviewed were sexually abused by men, sometimes under the guise of love, but often through overt violation. When they told their stories, they told them as hushed confidences. Bacilio does not have shame with which to contend. After telling of his sister's narrow escape from rape by three men, "cayotes," whom she paid to transport her across the border, he candidly adds: "You know, it is a lot of work and difficult for a woman to come up here from Mexico. It's very rare that a woman makes it up here without having been molested." Women who are in the country legally and not married are vulnerable in another way. Since marriage is one of the few ways to acquire legal status, men seek out women who will marry them. It is not uncommon for the man to be already married. One woman found out the night before she was to be married that her groom-to-be had a family in Mexico.

Literacy as Threat

When I began my research on literacy I asked nothing about sexuality. It quite amazes me that, despite this bias in my work, so many incidents were revealed – too many to ignore.

Maria's voice echoes in my mind. I don't know if I will ever forget her passionate cry; I know that I don't want to.

> I don't want to be a housekeeper all my life. I would like to be somebody, you know.... I would like to go out to talk to people, to work, to do something interesting, to help somebody. It's terrible, because they say, "You are the woman. You have to stay in the home, you have to do dinner." You have to do *everything*.

Like Yolanda, Maria is one of the many women we interviewed whose husband would not permit her to go out of the house. Even before they were married, he had objected to her going to school, and she finally stopped going. When I interviewed her, she expressed her strong desire to study, to return to school, to do work that feels meaningful to her ... to be *somebody*. Since her marriage and birth of a child, she has felt her husband change toward her, treating her more brutally, leaving her night after night to go out with his friends. Alone, isolated, she feels that she is no one. In a similar way, Yolanda describes how her husband changed after her marriage: "with the years, he began to see that I was absolutely alone, and he thought ... why shouldn't I treat her this way?" At the time of the interviews, Maria was dreaming of running away to Mexico with her child, and Yolanda, already separated from her husband for several years, was working as a cleaning woman and returning to school in the hope of becoming a secretary.

Marriage, rather than education, is the "rite of passage" for the Latina. Marriage is the only way out of her parents' home; it is the only legitimate option for her to get out from under her father's control. With the exception of Clementina, who at the age of twenty-eight lived at home under the strict authority of her father and brothers, all the women we interviewed had been married. Most Latina marry in their teens; they are soon pregnant and, before long, have several children. All are Catholic. As Teresa, in her interview by Coles and Coles (1978), explains:

> Your whole life depends on your husband. My aunt tells my cousins what kind of man to marry – someone who will take care of you and protect you. I have dreamt that I would someday meet a man who would have a lot of money, and he would have a big car, and we would drive away and live in a big house. Then I will have a happy life. But I won't meet a man like that. (p. 131)

In general, unless they are more highly educated, husbands are opposed to their wives taking classes or learning more than the rudiments of literacy in English. Once the acquisition of literacy moves beyond a question of basic survival skills, it carried with it the symbolic power of education. As such, it poses a threat to the power (im)balance in the family. Men want to feel in control; not only does this mean having more power than their wives, but controlling what they think and do. This is especially so when the man feels little or no power at work, or in the family as the "breadwinner," or in other social positions associated with masculinity. This may explain the large investment in the "macho act" of drinking. According to the women we interviewed, masculinity as domination is especially brutal in a culture where machismo reigns. The words of Maria echo the feelings of many: "I don't want a macho. I want a man."

Many of the women live with a great deal of violence in their daily lives. Alcoholism, or heavy drinking by their husbands, leaves them feeling desperate. It takes time for this underbelly of family violence to emerge. After six interviews, Modesta broke down and sobbed: "He drinks a lot, he is very much like a man. Right now, things aren't going very well for us. He loves his children very much but he treats me badly. Very badly." As she told this story, she did so by way of explaining why her plans to return to school were continually aborted and unrealisable. Several other women related stories of being beaten; some left their homes, called the police or turned to the priest. Rosa related part of her story:

> It got to the point where he was drinking so much. He'd come home and try to beat up on all of us. My children were very small. I used to tell him, "You can do anything to me" – he'd get mad at me and beat me up – "but please don't touch the children. Leave them alone."

There are many more stories. Sometimes the violence is physical, sometimes more subtle. While it is true that not all the women talk of violence, it is also true that we asked very little about marital relationships – we did not even directly ask about her husband's attitude toward her going to school. These stories came out in the course of informal conversations between women about how literacy and English-language practices fit into the texture of their daily lives. It is the fact that I did not explicitly look for this information, and did not fully appreciate its significance when I heard it, that makes me aware of the importance of reconceptualizing how we think about literacy and educational participation where it involves women.

One reason why I have stayed away from including these incidents of violence in past accounts is that I do not want to feed into racist, class-biased stereotypes about "Mexicans." In time, I have begun to rebel against this privileging of race and class over sexual violence. I can no longer tolerate protecting men at the cost of continuing to silence women's violation.

While all women do not talk of violence, I want to stress that, under conditions of systematic sexism, we are oppressed through sexual practices that are enshrined as normal by the family, church, and other social institutions. While its form varies, violence toward women is not limited to particular class or culture – and it has consequences that must be taken seriously if we really mean to address the question of woman's right to learn.

It saddens me greatly as I write this. I have lived in the face of male rage and violence. I have a feeling for what it means to live daily in the face of threat, never knowing what act will be interpreted as a transgression, an attack upon *male right* or power (Corrigan, 1986), setting off an explosion. You risk doing nothing to set off that rage and withdraw into the safety of a kind of death. The consequence is that you do not even consider the possibility of moving in what is perceived as a potentially threatening direction.

I am extremely privileged in comparison with the women I interviewed. I cannot help but think of how much more severely they are trapped if they live in a violent home situation. As the entry point to further education, literacy especially can be experienced as a threat that furthers withdrawal; not only is there the continuing threat of violence at home with which to contend, but the lack of economic and social options for leaving. A husband does not have to oppose directly his wife's taking classes for the wife to censor herself and never allow the possibility. In situations where violence is part of daily life, and overwork already severe, it is almost impossible to find the energy to move in new directions, especially when these mean further upheaval and violence.

Literacy as Desire

Women are more likely to develop their English literacy skills once they are separated or divorced. Several of the women we interviewed had left their husbands and talked of changing their lives through education. For example, Patricia left the factory, explaining, "I know I am capable of doing something more than running a machine." Like the other, younger women we interviewed, she knows enough English so that she can see the possibility of finding a different kind of work. Youth, education and knowing some English tend to go together, as do the hope and desire for a better life. The influence of the women's movement in the dominant culture is an ingredient in the change in perspectives of some of the younger women. Undoubtedly, this is also a factor in male opposition as traditional gender divisions and sexual control is being resisted by women who want to do "something" with their lives. Maria expands upon her yearning "to be somebody":

> In the future, I would like to go to school . . . because I would like to have something more meaningful than a factory job. If I go to the school, I want to try to find some interesting job – you know – to learn how to get some more money doing something different because I need to be some other woman, you know. I don't want to be the same all the time.

It is possible that "going to school" and/or becoming literate in English poses a greater threat to the Latino male than that experienced by other (non-immigrant?) men. Clearly, as a public space, school poses, for women, the possibility of contact with other women. Moreover, the school, and English, are both products of the dominant culture, as well as the passageway toward integration within it. English carries all of the power of the dominant language, as well as its cultural and social representations. To underline an obvious point, literacy is much more than a set of reading and writing skills. Literacy is a language and it is always about something. It cannot be separated from political processes that produce the content of the texts read, nor from the social situation in which readers relate to the texts. Literacy is a social practice, as well as a discursive and ideological practice, and it symbolizes becoming "educated." Just as education is embedded in sexist and racist regulatory practices of social control (Rockhill, 1987), it also produces and responds to the desire to change – to move out of one's class and cultural location, out of the confines of one's home – to become a lady, to be "some other woman," to do more fulfilling work, "to live a life," as one woman put it.

When women talk of literacy, they express feelings of desire. They have the desire to one day learn English, to go to school. Despite this desire, they do not think of literacy as a "right" for themselves, but for their husbands and their children. Acutely keen is their desire for their children to become educated.

Women do not put themselves first, but last, within the family. Even Elena, the highly educated, gifted woman we interviewed, now works as a domestic. Still, she explains how it is that she thinks of her life as a success:

> I consider myself to be a successful woman because I went to the school and they told me that my son was the best and that he likes to study. That is a triumph for me. And then, my husband says to me, "My work is going better and better." This is also a success for me.

Elena had to stop taking English classes because she could not find the time, with the combination of extensive family responsibilities and working as a domestic labourer six days a week. She accepts that she will never return to her profession, and devotes all her energies to providing a better life for her family.

As indicated, education symbolizes the hope for a better life, a different life, a way out of the working class into a world of middle class culture and lifestyle. The dream, for most women, is that they and/or their daughters can enter this world through secretarial work, nursing or teaching. For women whose only options are field, domestic, or factory work, the world of commercial and professional practice holds the hope of looking like and of being "somebody." This is what I think Maria means when she says, "I would like to be a somebody, you know."

Yolanda, working nights as a cleaning woman, talks of saving to send her daughters to finishing school and of providing them with a superior education so that:

> They have the way of getting a good job, without killing themselves, without having to work in the job that I have, which is not a . . . it's not a job which one can be ashamed of, but it's not a very clean job. Work is work, right? Because I work in this, I think that I am no less than others who work in offices, right? But if they have the way to work in an office, to have contact with people who have an education which is a bit higher than one has, then your children are going to improve.

Office work is clean work; it is also the way to meet a desirable partner for those who are unmarried. It is the home of dominant cultural images of femininity which depict slim, well-dressed, unmarried, beautiful, smiling women, working in offices. This image holds out the promise of marriage to a non-macho man and, as such, it poses a threat to the Hispanic male. Marriage is not questioned by the women we interviewed. Instead, the violence of marriage is explained in terms of machismo, not the institution itself and the power dynamic it constitutes.

The occupational structure of women's work is also significant to understanding the romanticization of office work. The primary way out of factories for women historically has been through employment in offices, teaching, nursing, or other forms of the "helping" professions. That these jobs are highly literacy dependent – that is, they demand highly developed literacy skills – is important to understanding the gendering of literacy. For women there has not been a middle level of work, where *some* capacity to speak, read and write in the dominant language is enough; instead these capacities have to be highly developed for movement into a more desirable kind of work. Except for the young and highly educated, the women we interviewed cannot learn enough English to move into the next stratum of occupations open to them.

While efforts to train women for work in the trades are noteworthy and potentially significant (Das Gupta, 1986), these initiatives will be problematic unless the issue of literacy as desire is addressed. The women who were interviewed do not want to be machinists; they want to be secretaries – and this work is being revolutionized by technology. If women are to turn to another kind of work, they have to see this as desirable, and this means that the dominant, sexualized and gendered images of desirable work for women have to change. It also means that proficiency in the English language cannot be used as a prerequisite to training, and that possibilities for learning English have to be better structured into the material and oppositional realities of women's lives. An obvious "solution" is to offer programs that teach "English in-the-workplace" but, unless other opportunities for schooling and education are also opened to immigrant women – unless the symbolic and ideological significance of literacy as schooling is addressed – the consequence will be to continue the class and ethnic biases of education.

Conclusion

This account suggests how gender difference is constituted and constitutive of literacy practices in everyday life. Even in something that appears as asexual as literacy, gender difference cannot be separated from domination through woman's sexuality. This is vividly portrayed by the public/private split between the worlds inhabited by men and women, the ways in which it is lived and enforced.

Under conditions of systematic sexism, gender means domination for women. Domination is economic and sexual. It is lived through our bodies, our family structures, our work, our cultural and educational practices, and the structure of the labour market.

Not to conceptualize themselves as having rights, to put themselves last, whether by choice or force, to take on the bulk of the responsibility for the family, is typical of the women we interviewed. In the case of physical violence, a woman bears it until it affects her children, rather than break up the family and break out of her enforced isolation.

Sexuality and literacy are connected. Woman's sexual domination is reproduced as literacy is lived through the gendered practices of the family and society. Literacy is integral to how our subjectivities are constructed so that these practices are taken to be natural and normal.

Women engage in literacy practices as part of the work of the family. When it becomes associated with education, literacy poses the potential of change and is experienced as both a threat and a desire. Thus, the anomaly that literacy is women's work but not women's right. And, the related anomaly that, in the "public" world of work, women who are not fluent in English are barred from access to the highly literacy-dependent work of women.

The images of desire associated with literacy and education are associated with images of the middle class, femininity and anglo ethnocentrism. These images pose a threat to traditional Hispanic family relations, especially when they challenge the male's experience of his masculinity. In these situations, the woman's participation in schooling can exacerbate violence. As such, it also poses a threat to women who do not want to put their families or themselves at risk.

To act seriously upon the principle of literacy or learning as a right – or even a possibility – for women, we must reconceptualize how we think about "the political" to include "the personal." Our educational work suffers from a splitting between the public and the private which reinforces the domination of women through gendered practices. While we have begun to look into reproductive practices, we are wary of acknowledging the centrality of family, religious, and other cultural forms, as well as sexual practices, to women's oppression. We act as though literacy is neutral, in some way apart from these forms, and so miss its charged dynamic for women. We must be willing to venture into the sensitive world of the supposedly private sphere; the sanctified realm of the family and church, the hidden realm of the sexual, the constitution of our subjectivity, and the ways in which literacy/learning/education enter into that constitution, also becomes a key political question.

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14

Rethinking "Femininity": Women in Adult Education

Arlene Tigar McLaren

Going to school does not entail just learning facts, skills or theories. It also involves acquiring an understanding about oneself. Central to learning about the self is learning about one's gender identity. In everyday interaction and in the curriculum, individuals confront themselves and others as gendered beings. Females learn about "femininity" and males learn about "masculinity" (Elkin and Handel, 1978).

Both feminist and non-feminist scholars have found socialization theory useful for the understanding of gender difference (e.g., Parsons, 1955; Weinreich, 1978). Socialization theory helps to explain how women and men accept their differentiated places in society, and how the gendered order is reproduced from one generation to another. As Barrett and McIntosh (1982) note, feminist analysis of gender socialization has been in many respects revelatory and consciousness-raising. Powerful accounts of the construction of passive, dependent femininity have proved both educationally and politically useful (p. 106).

Socialization theory has achieved such pre-eminence that it is almost no longer subject to debate. Despite its usefulness for explaining gender differentiation, however, it rests on several shaky assumptions. In what follows, I will examine the theory of socialization and recent criticisms of it. To illustrate several points of this discussion, I will turn to my own study of women in adult education.

The Theory of Socialization and Its Critics

As useful as the theory of socialization is for explaining femininity and masculinity, its adherents tend to make several questionable assumptions: that the content of socialization is unproblematic; that individuals are passive in their acceptance of ideas and values; that the psychological relationship between the primary agent of socialization and the individual is positive and reinforcing; and that the perceptions and plans of individuals are unaffected by the availability of opportunities in a society.

How are girls socialized to be feminine? According to Parsons (1955), girls are socialized into expressive roles primarily through their identification with their mothers which, he argues, is necessary for the harmonious functioning of modern society. Weinreich (1978), though critical of what happens to girls, believes that a process similar to that depicted by Parsons occurs. Girls, she argues, are socialized into feminine roles to ensure the continuation of male dominance in society. Both writers assume that the content of gender roles is unproblematic, that individuals passively accept the gender roles they are socialized into, that the process of socialization – and not the opportunity structure – is the chief reason for gender differentiation, and that mothers serve as a positive model with whom girls identify.

Compare this approach with that of Anyon (1983) who suggests:

> gender development involves not so much passive imprinting as active response to social contradictions. Thus, for girls, gender development will involve a series of attempts to cope with – and resolve – contradictory social messages regarding what they should do and be. (p. 19)

According to Anyon, in American society two sets of ideologies exist which contradict one another – what is appropriate behavior for females (for example, caring for men and children, especially in the domestic realm) and what is appropriate for obtaining self-esteem as an individual (for example, succeeding, through competition, in the non-domestic realm). In her study of grade 5 children, Anyon found that in the face of such contradictory ideologies, gender development for girls involves an active response of both accommodation and resistance. Stereotyped sex role messages had not been "successfully" internalized.

Similarly, but in an historical vein, Grubb and Lazerson (1984) argue that both the ideologies of liberalism and domesticity have been central to capitalism. But as women increasingly enter the labour market, it may be that liberal ideology and the power of economic development will prove to be more powerful than the ideology of domesticity. We cannot automatically assume that women's priorities are concerned with the family or that once having reached some resolution about the pushes and pulls of employment and the family, that the resolution will be final. We cannot assume, as Barrett and McIntosh note in their theoretical discussion of subjectivity (1982: 105-30), that every individual is the victim of a monolithically imposed value system that is static and pregiven.

Considering the psychological, rather than the ideological level, we cannot assume, as the theory of socialization does, that daughters will unequivocally accept their mothers as positive role models. While there is considerable evidence that mothering is reproduced due to the process of identification and psychosexual dynamics (Chodorow, 1978; Chodorow and Contratto, 1982), a daughter's reflection upon the nature of her mother's life can lead to a major questioning of it. If her mother has been deeply unhappy and dissatisfied, or if the daughter so perceives her mother's life, the daughter may well attempt to transcend the narrow confines of her mother's existence.

Beyond these problems concerning the content of socialization, the model of the individual, and the psychological relationship between mothers and daughters, lies another misleading assumption. While values and ideology are crucial for understanding women's position, we should not be blinded to the material constraints with which women are confronted. The real lack of opportunities for women surely affects how they perceive the world and their place in it. As Gaskell (1985) suggests,

> Young people take into account not just what they would ideally like, but what they see as possible and feasible. In a recent Vancouver study, adolescent girls felt that in order to have a family at all they would have to do the domestic work and plan their work lives around this. Men would not do the domestic work, alternative forms of child care were not available or good for their children, and as women they would earn less money than men and be less likely to be hired in nontraditional areas. It was these perceptions of constraining social structures, rather than internalized preferences, that explained their continuing adherence to traditional paths. (p. 50).

Not only do women realistically take into account the constraints that face them, they may actively struggle against those constraints. They may appear to the observer to be standing still and mutely accepting their position. But in their hearts, thoughts and deeds, they may try over and over again "to get out from under." The theory of socialization tends to suggest that women have "chosen" their positions in accordance with traditional values. It does not acknowledge sufficiently that women find themselves forced into their positions due to misogyny, discrimination, neglect, or harassment. Nor does it acknowledge that the odds against women changing their positions are quite staggering (see, for example, Fitzgerald, Guberman and Wolfe, 1982; Guberman and Wolfe, 1985).

This paper joins those revisionist works that are critical of traditional theories of socialization (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Willis, 1977; Gaskell, 1985; Anyon, 1983; Chodorow, 1978; Wrong, 1961). In particular, it stresses the importance of exploring the process of human agency within the context of social structural constraints. But in contrast to previous revisionist educational studies such as Willis who looks at working-class lads, Gaskell, who examines working-class girls, and Anyon who compares working and middle-class girls, this paper analyzes the experiences of adult women (both working and middle class).[1]

Too often we look at elementary and secondary schooling as determining what people become. But in fact people are always becoming, and changing. Adult education is an important site for women to think about their "femininity." As an illustration, I will examine a group of women who were enrolled in an adult education program in England. By listening to them speak, one hears them attempting to cast off conceptions others have of them, to revise their own conceptions of themselves and to construct a new configuration of femininity.

One hears them speak of their fears, hopes, desires, disappointments, and anger. Indeed, one hears their anguish as they think about their mothers' lives; one hears their frustration as they talk about their struggles to find rewarding jobs. They do not simply "learn," or passively accept what others have (implicitly or explicitly) told them. They distance themselves from what they've been told to do; they reject; they rebel. They are critical of an old configuration of femininity. They attempt to construct for themselves a new configuration of femininity which, specifically, incorporates employment as well as domesticity as a major commitment in their lives. Their return to education is part of that attempt. They are optimistic that their lives will improve at least regarding job opportunities.

The Study

My original intent in undertaking this study was to find out what enrolling in adult education can mean to women. My research rests on a small group who, in the mid-1970s, enrolled in a woman's college located in a suburb of London, England.[2] These women do not represent all female adult students. On the contrary, I chose deliberately to examine a specific group: those who are enrolled in full-time, academic education. I wanted to know how they had made that commitment. Beyond that, I wanted to know how women who do not have privileged educational backgrounds can make such a decision. Few of the students at the college had completed secondary school.[3] The college accepted them on the basis of an interview, not school grades or diploma. The two-year program offered by the college is equivalent to the last few years of secondary school and the first year of higher education. The curriculum is oriented towards the humanities and social sciences. Besides providing a general liberal arts education, the college program serves as a preparation for professional training in such traditional female occupations as teaching and social work.

Since the 1950s, women's lives have changed dramatically regarding rates of education, employment, fertility, and divorce (see, for example, Gaskell, 1985; Eichler, 1983). I was interested in women's subjective understanding of such changes. Accordingly, I asked the women about important areas of their lives: their childhood upbringing, education, ambitions, employment and domestic histories. Because they had made a significant transition in their lives, I wanted the women to tell me what happened to them. At the time of my study, I was not specifically concerned with challenging socialization theory. I was interested, however, in examining women who I thought might be trying to "break out."

As noted above, I listened carefully to the voices of these women. I did not, however, just listen; sometimes I asked specific questions. During the two years of the study, I talked to the women both formally and informally. Within the first several months of their enrollment at the college, I interviewed all the students; I then interviewed them at the end of the first and second years, and finally, interviewed some of them six years later. Because I was trying to avoid imposing as much as possible my preconceptions upon the students, I encouraged them to bring up subjects themselves and to pursue them in their own words. In some interviews, I hardly asked any questions. In one, after asking the student a simple question, I listened for an hour as she "took the ball and ran with it." In many of the interviews, however, I did interject, intervene, and probe to ensure that everyone covered the same topics. Besides interviewing students, I chatted to them informally and, as a participant observer, spent two or three days each week at the college.

Though in numerous instances I did not ask many questions, I was instrumental in encouraging the women to give an account of their experiences. My presence and my probing forced the students to think about what had happened to them in particular ways. In their responses, they no doubt took into account the fact that I was a trans-Atlantic feminist. But they also came to know me as an individual, and in many cases as a friend, which helped to enrich our conversations and give them greater authenticity.[4] Because I interacted with the students in a variety of settings, I was able to weigh carefully the validity of their statements. Many invited me to their homes, and introduced me to their friends and families.

Childhood Education

In general, the women I studied indicated that they had been taught by their parents and teachers to expect that domesticity would be their primary concern as adults. But by the time they had reached the college, they had formulated a position for themselves which rejected a good deal of their past socialization and education. They were, on the whole, highly critical of their school experiences and the expectations their parents had of them. Much of their criticism centres on the kind of feminine "conditioning" they had undergone.

When I asked the women to talk about their childhood education, their memories were vivid and often strongly expressed. Most had unhappy memories of their school experiences. Nearly all had dropped out of school early. They had returned to education not because of pleasant memories. On the contrary, they assumed that either their circumstances had changed sufficiently or that they themselves had changed; only now could they benefit for the first time from an educational experience. Most remembered having very little schooling, schooling of poor quality, or school experiences that were painful. Mabel[5] only went to a village school:

> Looking back, the teaching was appalling; academic ability didn't enter into it.

Heather, the eldest girl of a large family, often missed school because of her family responsibilities:

> We had a large family and after school days it was a case of leaving school and then being of use at home. . . . When I'd been kept home from school to help in the house and had been away some, I just hated going back. One particular teacher ridiculed me in front of the class, so I put off going back.

Rachel, an illegitimate child who lived in poverty, put it this way:

> Well, I had a very tough time. I didn't like it. I couldn't stand school. I loved to learn, but I had so many barriers against me. I was quite pleased to get out.

Emily, educated just before World War II, stated:

> Oh God, that was very scanty. The war year interfered with it. I was evacuated. I left when I wasn't even fourteen – thirteen and eight months.

When I asked Cynthia, who was raised in Nigeria, if she had liked school, she replied:

> Well, I didn't in that the idea then was the cane; it was really used. . . . They instilled fear in the minds of people. You dreaded going to school.

The reason why the women felt dissatisfied with the childhood schooling varied a great deal. They came from very different backgrounds. Some had been raised in Africa, Jamaica, Europe or Australia. Some had gone to school in the 1930s and 1940s, others during the post World War II period. Some went to secondary modern schools, others to grammar schools. About one-half were raised in what are conventionally seen to be working-class homes and the other half in so-called middle-class homes. With such varied experiences, it was not surprising that the reasons for their dissatisfaction ranged widely. Yet, despite that variability, a common theme was articulated. Their schooling was inadequate in part because they were girls. Jennifer, who went to a convent grammar school, described her schooling this way:

> I had great hopes for it. I quite enjoyed my primary school and I thought of all the marvelous new subjects I'd be doing. Well, after the first year it became obvious they were very interested in things like neatness, tidiness and obedience, that sort of thing and, if you tended to be a bit forgetful and untidy, they sort of marked you as a bad character and you got this feeling that you were bad. They just didn't encourage you.

These women did not accept the blame for having failed or not completed their schooling. In the main, they were adamant that their troubles with schooling lay elsewhere. Most were critical of their parents, who they claimed, tended to believe that girls did not need much of an education: "My mother didn't think it was really necessary for me to go to school. It was just for boys," or "It was the sort of thing when they say, 'You're a girl. You'll only grow up and get married and what's the use of educating you.'" Many thought that their teachers were more interested in their female charges behaving themselves properly than in their acquiring knowledge. As Clare put it:

> When I look back, the teachers' attitudes to the pupils was like teaching children. They could have been a lot more open and less narrow-minded. There's nothing you can do about it, especially in the girls' grammar school. There were a lot of petty rules. . . .

And Lillian,

> It was a girls grammar school, state school. It was a funny situation. All the Catholics go to Catholic schools and all the Protestants go to state school, you see; so it's a very, very narrow educational system and the teachers are all sort of middle-aged Protestant spinsters or Presbyterian spinsters and it's the most terrible race of people you'd ever want to teach you. They're not the sort of people to make you enjoy education.

The problem of gender was crucial to many of the women when they attempted to understand what happened during their experiences in school. Other systematic problems such as social class and race were also apparent to some of them.[6] Belonging to a lower class or a non-white race could subject the women to excruciating experiences as children. Felicity insisted:

> They tried to make it a posh school and it was in the East End – really ridiculous. I just couldn't be bothered with it. I hated the headmaster. He expelled my sister. I was fed up with the whole thing.

This is not to say that, as children, the women had articulated their experiences this way. But as adults, they had a vocabulary and knowledge of the world that allowed them to see inadequacies of their childhood education in particular ways. Some of these perceptions no doubt had developed before coming to the college. Many of the women told me such stories during the first few weeks of their program. They continued to do so throughout the two years of the study. In general, these women were critical of their past socialization experiences and education. They rejected especially the kind of femininity that their parents and teachers assumed was necessary for them.

In speaking about the expectations their parents had regarding their schooling, the women were particularly critical of the way that they drew upon an old, outdated notion of femininity. Most of the women indicated that because their mothers had devoted themselves to marriage and motherhood they expected their daughters to do the same thing. Their fathers, some of the women pointed out, did allow for the possibility that their daughters might have ambitions apart from domesticity.

When asked what their parents expected of their education, many of the women brought up immediately the question of marriage. Their supposed future of marriage and motherhood weighed like a wet blanket on their educational prospects. As Angela stated:

> Oh God, it's commonly accepted, where I come from, that a girl leaves school at fifteen. She'll work in the mills for a few years and she'll get married and that's it. "You're off my back," kind of thing.

Some of the women made it clear that it was their mothers rather than their fathers who tried to pass on the mantel of domesticity. Annie remarked:

> My father did (encourage me at school), but my mother was of the old school and thought it wasn't necessary for a girl to have an education – you're going to get married and stay at home anyway, so really all you had to do was have a pretty face and that's all you required.

And Kate:

> My mother didn't think that education was necessary and my father thought it definitely was; he was absolutely furious about what was going on, but he was too busy with his job, which was very demanding.

Most of the women did not recall being encouraged by their parents to develop a serious interest in education or to form strong occupational ambitions. Some of them were discouraged from staying on at school, some were given no guidance whatsoever and others were only encouraged to take education seriously by one parent, usually the father rather than the mother. A familiar refrain of the women was that their mother was of the "old school."

There were various reasons why their parents did not provide strong educational and occupational encouragement. To begin with, their parents had usually left school at an early age and found it hard to see the value of education. Even though some did appreciate its value, they did not understand what it entailed and could not give specific encouragement. Moreover, most of them did not believe that education was important for girls whose lives would soon be taken up with marriage and children.

Occupational and Marital Ambitions

What kinds of occupational and domestic ambitions did the women recall having when they were at school? Most claimed that they had had no definite ideas in secondary school about occupational goals. Their sense of the future tended to be vague and to promise little more than factory, shop or clerical work. Their girlhood expectations varied but none were marked by high ambition: some simply had not thought about their occupational future; some expected to end up as girls usually do in shops or offices; some were dreamers and some wanted something different but did not know what it would be. As Jessie noted:

> I had no idea really that there was anything beyond going into a shop, going into an office or doing all the usual things that girls do at that time.

Di said:

> I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to do anything secretarial, which was one of the main options for me. So in the end I went to work as a telephonist and I got really bored, almost immediately.

In reporting their own ambitions, few indicated that they themselves placed a high priority on getting married and having children. Though they did not recall having strong educational and occupational goals, they also did not recall having strong marital and maternal ambitions. A few said that they had expected to marry soon after leaving school since "it is what girls usually do." But most did not. Instead, marriage had been "very much in the future," "always over the hill," or "not looming large on the horizon at all."

In response to the question of whether or not she expected to marry soon after leaving school, Jean asserted:

> No, definitely not. I just didn't want to. I didn't feel old enough, mature enough. I still don't.

Beatrice responded:

> Actually I knew I would get married but I never wanted to get married. Funnily enough I was very undomesticated. I couldn't visualize myself as a housewife. I saw myself married "one day." I had no great desire to get married.

Most insisted that, as adolescents, domesticity did not have a strong appeal to them. Some suggested that domesticity originally had great appeal but as they became older, it lost its lustre. As Jill wittily put it:

> It's rather a funny way of explaining it, but do you know about the cargo cult in New Guinea? They believe if they wear certain uniforms and do certain things, cargo will come crashing out of the sky. I think this is the sort of syndrome women get caught up in. They feel if you get a house, a Hoover automatic and do the washing once a week and you iron the shirts properly, happiness will come. It's not that way at all. But you get caught up in it. I think it's just like the cargo cult thing, you know. You make the right moves and yet the things don't happen and, of course, they can't, you know that, but it's a shock. I think that's the best way I can explain how I felt anyway.

In recalling childhood experiences, most of the women presented a picture of themselves as having missed out on educational opportunities largely because of the misguided notions of their parents and teachers regarding their femininity. Whether this represents what happened in the past does not really matter. The women see their experiences this way now and want others to believe their stories. Hidden within their stories are the contradictions of their desires. They present themselves as having accepted the ideological messages concerning femininity that were propogated by their parents and teachers. This helps to explain why they did not "succeed" in school and why they now need adult education. Yet, they also suggest that they were not duped by such messages. The idea of marriage was not very important to them. They wanted something different from the traditional feminine role. As they tell their stories, they see their lives being shaped by both constraint and free will. Such a view allows them to deal with the "failures" of their past and to look forward optimistically towards the future.

Mothers and Daughters

All the women I interviewed thought that they had entered the contemporary world insufficiently prepared to play their adult roles. Most felt that their teachers and parents had not taken the question of their future employment very seriously; it had been all too readily assumed that as adults they would be primarily engaged in housekeeping and the rearing of children. Despite this apparent early socialization, the women at the college, whatever their ages and familial circumstances, eventually began to realize that something had to be done to improve their chances of gaining satisfactory employment.

How they reached this conclusion had to do in part with their observations of their mothers' experiences. Most were critical of their mothers' lives. Some like Angela, expressed sadness at the ways their mothers' lives had turned out:

> I feel very sad about my mother. She didn't complain, she just got on with it. I never heard her verbalize any dreams, except that she wants grandchildren. . . . In fact that's another thing behind my pushing towards education. For one thing I always thought I'd never get married because my mother's first marriage was disastrous and, although my mother and stepfather get on, they argue. God, I'd hate to live a life like that – surviving, not really happy. I suppose she's happy in her own way. I could never be happy like that, never never in a million years. I get upset often when I think about her.

Some, like Jill, were angry:

> I can't remember a time when (my mother) wasn't working, except when she was pregnant with my youngest brother. . . . I remember her going off to work in the morning just before we got up, working in the hospital as a cleaning lady and things like that. . . . She never felt she was supposed to enjoy life. It was just a feminine thing. Because she was a woman and of that period, she thought women suffered and so that was the end of it and there was no choice, which seems to be her idea really. She tried it on me, I think, and I said, "Why should you behave that way? I don't understand it."

Others, like Polly, had difficulty comprehending their mothers' attachment to domestic life;

> I think she accepted (being a wife and mother) because she felt it was the only possible thing. I always feel she could have done great things. She has got tremendous drive, great intelligence and I think she feels very frustrated that there was never the opportunity or the environment to do it. She says she was happy staying at home and looking after the children, but I'm sure she wasn't, because she isn't a quiet placid domesticated person at all – a very strong person and I'm sure, given any sort of training, schooling, she could have done a lot if she'd been born twenty years later.

Many of the women did not want to be like their mothers, who were primarily oriented towards the domestic sphere and, if employed, usually had jobs that offered few rewards.

Most of the women saw themselves as representing a generation that had different preoccupations and concerns than those of their parents. Although, to begin with, they obtained levels of education similar to their parents (often leaving school at the lowest permissible age) and like their mothers had traditional female jobs – inside or outside the home – they generally saw themselves as no longer, if they ever did, sharing their parents' conceptions of female adult roles. They tended to see themselves as part of a new generation, with new expectations and different needs. In particular, they believed that their adult roles would not necessarily be dominated by the demands of the domestic realm.

Some of them distanced themselves from their mothers and tended to identify more closely with their fathers. In relation to their mothers, their fathers were generally better educated (e.g., they had been apprenticed, self-taught, stayed in school longer, had more academic training, or taken adult education classes), more widely read and more fully involved in jobs or activities outside the home. Many thought of their parents, especially their mothers, as leading restricted and unhappy lives. Though the women, like their parents, had left school at a relatively early age and had entered jobs similar to those of their mothers, their lives had taken a different turn. In particular, they tended to feel that their own generation of women were benefitting from having a wider degree of choice open to them. If only their mothers had been born "twenty years later" they too would have been less constrained by the ideology of domesticity.

Marital and Occupational Experiences

Besides observing the lives of their mothers and sensing that old-fashioned views of femininity had constrained their lives unnecessarily, the women had surely become aware of social trends which suggested that stability of family life, if it ever existed, could not be assumed. No longer romantic, or starry-eyed with the illusions of youth, many of the women had witnessed significant changes in their society. Marriages seemed less stable, families smaller, and female participation in the labour force much greater. Though most had been taught to expect a life to be fulfilled by marriage and children, they had come to suspect that such expectations were unrealistic.

Furthermore, with the rise of the feminist movement in the late 1960s, they were provided with new ideas and a new vocabulary with which to reflect upon their own needs as individuals. If they felt that they were not being sufficiently fulfilled in their personal lives and that they lacked control over their marriages and relationships, they hoped that in the area of employment at least they would be able to exercise some control and find fulfillment.

Besides observing social trends, they had as adults their own domestic/personal experiences. At the beginning of the study, the average age of the women was thirty, and their ages ranged from 21 to 50. Their domestic circumstances varied a great deal. About one-half of the women were married or cohabiting. Some were separated or divorced. Some had lesbian relationships. About one-quarter had children who ranged from infants to adults. The women who had children were single, married, divorced, separated or widowed. Some of the women who were involved in intimate relationships did not live with their partners; others simply dated on occasion. During the two years of the study, several married, separated from their husbands or partners, had a child, or began cohabitation. Their responses to their personal relationships were not homogeneous. Some were happily married; others were in the process of disengaging themselves from an unhappy sexual/marital relationship; still others were looking forward to the fruition of a new relationship.

At the time of the interviews, the students were in a period of transition in which they were attempting to sort out their priorities regarding employment and marriage. The importance of the economic and domestic realms was a major topic of conversation during the two years of the study. The women's sense of priorities continuously fluctuated, depending on the audience, specific events and general moods of hope and fear. Most had not resolved how relatively important employment and domesticity were to them. At times, marriage and children were completely dismissed, at other times, paid jobs were seen as secondary.

But one overriding theme shared by all the women was that domesticity would not be their one and only objective. Despite the emphasis these women claimed their parents and teachers placed upon the importance of marriage and child rearing, these women saw that employment would be an important feature of their lives. Certainly, because they were involved in a course of study that could possibly lead to greater job opportunities, the women were particularly concerned with their occupational futures.

What kinds of jobs did the women hold before coming to the college? In the period between school and coming to the college, nearly all had had a lengthy exposure to employment. Many had left school at the age of fourteen or fifteen, most by sixteen. The vast majority of the women had worked in jobs that were predominantly female. They were child-care workers, telephonists, typists, secretaries, shop assistants or nurses. Almost all were dissatisfied with these sorts of jobs, though there were variations in the degree of dissatisfaction. Cindy remarked:

> Basically I liked (the laboratory job) but it became very humdrum, very repetitive. You did the experiments over and over again. . . I was so fed up with my job. I was thinking of doing something else, but what else I didn't know.

And Jennifer:

> It (the secretarial job) turned out to be typing. People will insist on building up jobs, misrepresenting them. I found I just couldn't tolerate being a secretary; I just couldn't stand it. I'd always despised secretarial jobs. I thought it was a silly job. . . . When you're a secretary you're doing somebody else's work all the time. I felt like an appendage to him – inferior.

Most reached a point in their career, before their enrollment at the college, at which they began to realize that their work was limited in scope or even value. It provided a wage and (in most cases) sociability, but in general, it did not promise any future in terms of promotion, increased responsibility and better pay, and was neither personally meaningful nor socially useful.

By looking at the employment histories of the women, we find that most did not passively accept their dissatisfying jobs; instead they actively sought other employment that might promise greater rewards. They eventually found, however, that the jobs available to them differed little in what they had to offer. Their mobility from job to job tended to be horizontal, not vertical. Di, who by the age of 22 had worked as an au pair, telephonist, clerk, and typist, asserted:

> I didn't want to get another job; the thought of going into one of those same awful jobs I'd been going in was just. . . . I couldn't stand it and I just didn't want to – to get another one of those awful jobs. I was trying desperately to find something else to do, or a college to go to. . . .

For a wide variety of reasons, nearly all of the women had moved from job to job trying to find rewarding work. But given their confinement to the ghetto of female labor, the women tended to find, despite their often desperate attempts to try different jobs, that all were "basically the same." Most were dissatisfied with their jobs because of poor wages, boredom, menial tasks, lack of responsibility, little chance of promotion and lack of personal and social meaning, typical characteristics of the kind of work in which most women in western capitalist societies are engaged (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1984).

It was not for lack of trying that the women had these types of jobs. On the contrary, what was so apparent is how many times they tried over and over again to find a better job, to take evening classes, to enroll in a full-time program of training. Their enrollment in adult education followed, for most, a whole series of efforts to extricate themselves from a treadmill of meaningless work. Take Angela's discussion, for example, of her attempts to take evening classes:

> Ever since I've left school I've been trying to take GCEs, but I've never got around to doing it. I'll go along to night school and stick it for about three or four weeks and then pack it in. Have you ever tried going to evening classes? I went to night school for about two months for shorthand and typing. Those of my friends who'd also left school, they weren't bothered; they were earning money. They were going out, spending it and having a good time. The girls who were still at school, their parents had enough money and it meant they were going out and having a good time. I just chucked it in then. Since then I've tried. But they're such lousy teachers. And then you've got all your work.

Discussion

That many of these women had ended up in jobs similar to those of their mothers – in the double ghetto – was not of course simply due to socialization patterns. Many had desperately wanted their lives to be different from their mothers. In general, their return to schooling signaled a triumphant resolution of aborted efforts to change their lives. They had returned to education despite the many obstacles that lay in their path. Their return was the result of persistent and active struggle. Many knew that their lives would have to be different. They had begun to see that employment, not just domesticity, would figure centrally in their lives. They placed a great deal of hope in the college. They wanted it to help them to resolve the dilemma that they faced: necessarily they were having to commit themselves to employment which was, nevertheless, structured along gender lines. As women, their choice of jobs was narrow. By gaining further education, they hoped that they would be able to find jobs that would somehow deserve their commitment. They hoped that, in contrast to their mothers' generation, their lives would somehow be less constrained and richer.

The desire for something different did not, nevertheless, prevent them from enrolling in a woman's college that helped to prepare them for traditional female professions. For most, the college was the first real educational opportunity that they had encountered. Their enrollment cannot be seen as merely the result of female conditioning. It was part of their active struggle to improve their lives.

Contrary to the presumptions of socialization theory, these women did not happily choose jobs according to their feminine values. They presented themselves as individuals, and sometimes even rebels, of the real world – not "angels in the house." They did not accept the old configuration of the ideology of femininity. They sought a new configuration that included employment as an essential part of their lives. They did not identify closely with their mothers' lives. They did not passively accept the values and ideals of their parents and teachers. They did not "choose" to work in dead-end jobs. They actively fought against the ways by which they were channeled into "female ghettos." It was not so much socialization into femininity that dictated their experiences, as it was a social structure that gave them too little room to manoeuvre.

The socialization theory is inadequate for helping us to understand social constraints, especially when one is considering the powerless. It implies that the victim, not the social structure is to blame for whatever befalls him or her. Since women "choose" their fate by adhering to feminine values, so the reasoning goes, very little can be done to improve their position. By itself, socialization is not a valid theory but an ideology that supports the status quo (see Ryan, 1976).

Despite their struggles and desperate attempts to lead full and satisfying lives, the women I studied are still trapped by the double ghetto. As many commentators (for example, Glazer, 1984; Grubb and Lazerson, 1984; Hartmann, 1984; Armstrong and Armstrong, 1984) have suggested, the rapid growth of women's employment has not ensured equality between women and men. Rather, as Hartmann (1984: 184) puts it so well, the ideal of the "family wage" – that a man can earn enough to support an entire family – may be shifting to a new ideal of the "wage differential" – that both men and women contribute through wage earning to the cash income of the domestic unit. Since women continue to work at "women's jobs" inside and outside the home which are low status and low paying, such an "ideal" perpetuates rather than transforms the sexual division of labor.

Mature women are, nevertheless, flocking to education. In a national survey of adults undertaken in 1982, the Canadian Association for Adult Education found that over 30% of Canadian women have returned to education, be it full-time, part-time, or occasional. Women are becoming part-time students in universities in record numbers. In 1970-71, only 43% of part-time learners were women; by 1980-81, women constituted 61% of part-time learners. In other sectors, however, women have not made such gains. Though women represent 40% of the labour force, the female share of Canada Manpower Training Program positions in 1980-81 was only 31% of the total. As well, nearly all were trained to fulfill traditional "feminine" occupations (Canadian Association for Adult Education, 1982: 5-14).

The research I undertook suggests that adult education is an important arena for helping women to overcome the many obstacles that they face. It can give them a sense of hope that their lives can improve, and by so doing it can help them to be critical of their feminine conditioning. But this, of course, is not enough. Adult education should not be just a passive, or indeed an oppressive, vehicle to which women turn out of desperation. It needs to help women improve their position. To do this, it needs to eliminate the male bias in its curriculum, to help women rethink their femininity, to provide training for a wide range of employment, and to make such services as child care readily available.[7] Finally, because it is a major social institution, adult education has a responsibility to help change society as a whole so that our culture, social organization, and economy reflects women's as well as men's interests.

Notes

I would like to thank Pat Burman, Jane Gaskell, and Angus McLaren for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

[1] For a discussion of the social class position of these women, see McLaren, 1981 and 1985.

[2] I studied all the women (with one exception) who attended the college the year I began the study. The sample consisted of 48 students. The college, founded in 1920, is part of a system of eight residential adult education colleges in England and Wales. With the exception of this college, these colleges have been exclusively available to men or admitted few women. The main intention of the colleges is to provide a liberal education for adults who did not complete their secondary schooling. Several of the colleges have a strong trade-union orientation. Though the colleges are designed to be residential, the actual living patterns of the students are quite flexible. For further discussion of the college I studied, see McLaren 1985.

[3] Most studies suggest that those who return to education tend to have privileged social class and educational backgrounds (see for example, Kidd, 1979; Canadian Association for Adult Education, 1982). Such studies are important, but they fail generally to understand the crucial ways by which gender interacts with education and social class (see McLaren, 1981).

[4] See Stanley and Wise's (1983) thought-provoking critique of "hygienic research," which argues that the personhood of the researcher cannot be left out of the research process (p.162). For further feminist criticism of traditional notions of objectivity, see Fee, 1983; Oakley, 1981; Bowles and Klein, 1983.

[5] I use pseudonyms to protect the women's identities.

[6] For further discussion of causal attributions relating to social class and race, see McLaren, 1982.

[7] For recent feminist discussions of adult education, see *Convergence*, 1980; Lovell, 1980; Hughes and Kennedy, 1983, 1985; Deem, 1983; Astin, 1976; Scott, 1980; Tittle and Denker, 1980; Walker, 1982, n.d.

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15

Skill Training in Transition: Implications for Women[1]

Nancy S. Jackson

Over the last decade, women's groups in Canada at the national, provincial and local levels have fought long and hard to secure a fair deal for women in post-secondary education in general, and in college and institute-based programs of vocational/technical education and training in particular. The issue of access has dominated these efforts to date, because structural barriers to women in this sector (which includes a wide range of employment-oriented courses in both male and female dominated fields) have been blatantly discriminatory and have contributed to the continuing economic disadvantage and dependence of a majority of Canadian women.

However, in the last few years, changes have taken place in the vocational/technical sector that pose a different kind of threat to women's interests. The new threat lies not with the problem of access, but with the quality and character of training programs being offered, and arises from the growing interest of policy makers in courses that service the short-term needs of employers. The design of instruction driven by this concern leads to problems within the learning environment itself. The conceptualization and organization of such instruction lead potentially, I will argue here, to impoverishment of the substance of vocational knowledge itself and to the separation of skills from the power and status of workers. While these developments are widespread in the arena of vocational and technical education and training, and affect both men and women, they should be of particular concern to feminists who see education and training as an important avenue for improving the economic status of women.

Although the issue of "skill training" has recently gained a good deal of public attention, North American academics have conventionally overlooked these "applied" programs, dismissing them as practical, instrumental, and therefore largely unproblematic from an educational point of view. This distinction between academically and vocationally oriented education produces some regrettable results. Strategically, it results in a dearth of critical investigation of the kinds of learning opportunities beyond public school which are accessible to the majority of the Canadian population, and on which women in particular rely heavily for entry to the labour market. Theoretically, the distinction perpetuates some very powerful but unexamined assumptions about the character of knowledge, skills and learning related to working life. These assumptions have been particularly damaging to our understanding of women's work and skills.

This paper will explore how concepts like "skill" and "competence" have been used by policy makers in the last decade to organize a new public consensus about the goals of education. I will argue that the interests of learners in general and women in particular are jeopardized by the current focus on the "requirements of industry" and the "needs" of the labour market, and that both a theoretical critique and political analysis are required to discern and defend women's interests in this context. This undertaking leads to some fundamental questions about the goals and objectives of current training policy in Canada.

Training Fever: Crisis and Solution

It has become commonplace to characterize the present decade as a period of educational crisis, and to locate the relation between education and work at the heart of the problem. As economic prosperity has faltered across the industrialized world, disrupting the fit between demand and supply of labour, aspects of educational provision have been widely identified as both a cause and a solution to the problem. Public schools have been charged with inefficiency and ineffectiveness in delivering the basic skills necessary to both social and employment situations. The post-secondary sector has been criticized for giving priority to the concept of individual opportunity rather than responding to the demands of the market for educated labour. Across North America and Western Europe there has been a resurgence of the view that the education system in its entirety should be understood in terms of its contribution to economic development and national prosperity (Neave, 1984; OECD, 1983; CEIC, 1983; Carnegie Council, 1980).

This general shift in the policy climate has led to a sharp reversal of the laissez-faire environment of educational expansion in the 1960s, and has brought increasing pressure to re-assert, indeed to reconstruct, a functional link between the educational apparatus and the needs of the economy (Finn, 1982; Avis, 1981; Gleason, 1983). There has been a marked resurgence of the highly technocratic and instrumentalist view that the needs of industry can best be served by achieving a tighter definition of the "fit" between technical qualifications and the demands of the work process, and then by restructuring the educational system to match these specifications (Finn, 1982; Avis, 1981; Moore, 1983). In this context, post-secondary technical and vocational education has emerged as the centerpiece of both educational and labour market policy. Observers have referred to this as the dawn of a new mass education sector for the twenty-first century (see e.g., Gleeson, 1983).

Critics of these developments argue that educational policy is being used in the present context as the solution to problems that are essentially economic and political in origin (see Gleeson, 1983; Donald, 1979). They argue as well that the current emphasis on training amounts to a re-assertion of the work ethic as a means of social discipline in the face of declining real opportunities for work, particularly among youth (see Bates, 1984). These criticisms grow out of an ongoing theoretical debate about the relationship between social and technical relations in the educational enterprise, and reflect, in part, the current emphasis on social aspects of production relations, such as hierarchies of power and knowledge, discipline, and attitudes toward work (Avis, 1981; Gleeson and Mardle, 1980; Hussain, 1976; Gorz, 1976). Such criticisms, however, stop short of examining another aspect of the social character of the educational enterprise, the constitution of job knowledge itself. That is, education and training processes themselves are integral to the social construction of job knowledge, i.e., the process of determining what "counts" as legitimate job knowledge. This process of determination is highly consequential for employers and employees alike, and is integral to the politics of the work place as well as of the educational environment. This paper formulates, in a preliminary way, this constitutive process as a topic for examination.

Skills: The New Consensus

On both sides of the Atlantic, the concept of skill has become the lynchpin of otherwise diverse strategies and objectives for change, orchestrating a broad public consensus about educational goals. It is important to notice that its usefulness in this regard depends upon what James Donald has called the "loose and baggy character" of the concept itself (1979:13; see also CCCS, 1981). "Skills" has become a metaphor for the total output of all our institutions of learning, and a standard by which they should be judged. "Skills" is used as measurement of accomplishment or of readiness for entry to almost any endeavor, be it private or public, economic or social. The list is familiar: basic skills, job skills, life skills . . . even "thinking skills" as seen in the title of an annual education conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. As a curricular category the concept of skills is particularly useful because it appears to be "indifferent to contents. . . . an empty space into which a whole range of contents [can] be inserted" (Grahame, 1983:5) Because the concept of skill carries with it overtones of status representing whatever is knowledgeable, even scientific, it lends an aura of authority to whatever falls in its shadow. It also serves to indicate that the need for innovation in education is driven by economic circumstances, implying a common stake in the outcome. For all these reasons, the concept has become in the last decade a dominant form of popular understanding about the purpose and objectives of education (CCCS, 1981).

A number of critics have pointed out that the concept of skills has achieved a place at the pinnacle of educational rhetoric by appearing to neutralize what is at its root a fundamental conflict between capitalist imperatives and popular needs. Lenhardt (1981:213) captures the breadth of this critique in the following passage:

> . . . the concept of educational interests has been replaced by the concept of skill requirements, which is seen as being determined by economic growth or technological process. Both economic growth as well as technological progress are conceived of as having political relevance but being themselves of rather technical, "apolitical" nature. If the identification of educational interests and their transformation into educational policies is regarded as a technical problem rather than a matter of mediating conflicting social interests, then public democratic discourse with regard to educational matters is rendered meaningless.

Lenhardt argues that the concept of skills puts the discussion of educational objectives on apparently neutral territory. It invokes a realm of abstract necessity, where skill may stand in for imperatives that are qualitatively diverse and even contradictory.

Underneath this abstract consensus, however, lies a long history of struggle between employers and workers for control over the organization of work processes and over the supply and demand for qualified labour. On the employers' side, the need for skills has been subject to a particular time, place and stage of economic development, but never straightforwardly determined by technical or technological considerations. Instead, the demand for skills has always been mediated by social and political considerations relevant to the control of work (Noble, 1984; Gordon et al., 1982; Edwards, 1979), in which the technical factors are themselves embedded (Gorz, 1976; Althusser, 1971; Gleeson and Mardle, 1980). Central to these political considerations has been the interest of employers in minimizing their costs of labour, an interest which affects the determination of "need" in terms of the quantity and quality of education and training which are desirable from the employers' point of view (Finn, 1982; Blackburn and Mann, 1979). Among workers and workers' organizations, the concept of skill has been an organizing device in the struggle for political, economic and social power, and control over educational measures has proved to be an important aspect of that struggle (see Gaskell, 1983; Clement, 1981; Barrett, 1980; More, 1980). It is important to keep in mind that these longstanding political divisions over the management of skill are the context in which the enterprise of vocational/technical education is embedded.

Since the mid-1970s, the use of the concept of skill to orchestrate decision-making about public policy in education has reached a new degree of sophistication. Educational planners and policy makers have turned their attention from the problem of "matching" demand and supply, to a concern for the way in which occupational skills are constituted, organized, and controlled in the context of learning. Historical forms of organization and control that invest skill within the purview of the worker, for which apprenticeships are the paradigm, have come to be seen as a limitation on the prerogative of employers to acquire, deploy and dispose of labour power according to their own interests. Previous concepts of craft mastery are being replaced by a different logic of skill in which the worker is in an employer-dependent role in a labour hierarchy

(Blackburn and Mann, 1979). Such a shift gives the employer more control over the specification and utilization of knowledge and skills and thus greater flexibility in the deployment of labour power. Facilitating this flexibility has become a central objective in the reform of vocational education and training.

The Competency Solution

In this climate, the concept of competence has emerged as a guiding principle of vocational instruction. It has found favour among employers and educators alike because it promises to specify the content of skill (in any given area) for the purpose of its teaching and learning. It transforms the abstract claim of skill, as something that one possesses, into a more tractable form as something that one can do or perform. The latter form is seen to be superior for educational purposes inasmuch as it makes skill amenable to measurement, assessment and certification. The movement to use competence as the organizing principle of a variety of delivery systems in post-secondary education has reached bandwagon proportions (Spady, 1977). It is widely in use in the United States in two-year and even four-year post secondary institutions, including some liberal arts programs (see Grant, 1979). It is the basis of curriculum used throughout Great Britain under both the Technician Education council and the Business Education Council, established in the mid-1970s (see Cantor and Roberts, 1979). In Canada, competency systems are being introduced by provincial ministries across the country at the technical and applied programs level (Jackson, forthcoming). Commentators on this phenomenon point out that competency-based learning seems to be "ready-made" for the educational concerns of our time: cost-effectiveness, accountability, and specificity of outcomes (Gamson, 1979). As leading American proponents of the approach have phrased it, "stockholders in the enterprise of education are demanding better dividends than they have been receiving in recent decades" (Harris and Grede, 1977:253). The competency approach promises to eliminate what is superficial, to ensure quality of output, and to guarantee results by linking student performance to institutional accountability. The basic features of the approach that form the basis for these claims are described in brief below.

Competency-based approaches to vocational/technical education specify very particular learning objectives and methods. First, they identify the employer as the primary consumer or end-user of occupational skills, and thus assign primary responsibility for defining learning objectives to employer groups within an occupational area. Commonly, these objectives are established in a controlled workshop setting under the direction of a curriculum specialist, and the product of the workshop process is called a skill profile. The skill profile is then passed on to educators for translation into educational plans and materials designed to meet the specified objectives. Secondly, competency-based approaches carefully specify the learning outcomes to be achieved in performative or behavioural rather than cognitive terms: hence the term "competency." The standard of accomplishment, and the basis of evaluation to which the instructional process is oriented, is the performance of specified, observable tasks, e.g., "to prepare ledger entries," "to transcribe dictated material," etc. The acquisition of these performance capabilities, rather than conceptual understandings of work tasks, is the legitimate object of the instructional process in the competency-based approach (Spady, 1980; Grant et al., 1979; Parnell, 1978; Knaak, 1977). This type of learning is widely accepted as appropriate for many vocational areas, and though even at the level of liberal arts instruction (see Ewan, 1979), though at that level it is subject to somewhat more debate and experimentation.

The concept of competence and the methods that have been introduced to education under its aegis are not new. Their history extends back to the turn of the century and the well-known work of the American Frederick W. Taylor ([1911] 1947) on scientific management and job analysis techniques (see Neumann, 1979; Tyler, 1975). Taylor made popular the basic techniques of job analysis adopted in competency-based systems, although he did not develop extensively the implications of this technique for education. The first large scale experiments with the educational applications of Taylor's ideas came in the United States with the onset of World War I and the resultant demand to train tens of thousands of trades people and technicians to support the war effort, both within the armed services and in the shipyards, munitions plants, and other war industries. Leading vocational educators hired by the U.S. War Department to design training schemes brought with them the unmistakable influence of Taylorism (see for example, Allen, 1919; Dooley, 1919). The resulting war-time training programs were widely acclaimed and led to a number of post-war publications which, in turn, were highly influential in the wider educational community (see e.g., Chapman, 1921; Toops, 1921; Mann, 1922). This accumulated experience of wartime training, combined with the work on scientific method in curriculum of the well-known educators Bobbit (1918) and Charters (1923), produced by the mid 1920s most of the salient features of competency-based education as it continues to be practiced to the present day (Newmann, 1979). In the 1920s these methods were hailed as measures for efficiency and economy in the educational sphere, and it is exactly these same ends that the competency approach has been called upon to serve in the 1970s and 80s.

In general, the competency approach shifts the practice in vocational/technical programs to more narrow, short-term, instrumental educational objectives. This is an integral part of the premise that competency programs are more flexible and responsive to the "needs" of industry than training programs have been in the past. This flexibility is accomplished by the replacement of lengthy and comprehensive programs and certifications with limited forms of training to levels specified by the employer to meet short-term goals. It involves treating knowledge and skills as incremental, i.e., subdivisible into component parts, and cumulative, so that they can be acquired over a lifetime in a pattern of recurrent work and schooling. This organization of learning is said to satisfy the needs of the worker for early access to the workforce, and to facilitate easy passage back and forth from work to training on a recurring basis throughout the adult working life. Thus the interests of all parties appear to be addressed.

Competency Criticized

The competency approach has also been the target of criticism on a number of grounds, and some of the leading criticisms are as old as the methods themselves. John Dewey's objections to vocationalism at the turn of the century foreshadow the most common criticisms of the competency approach to vocational instruction today. Dewey argued that narrow occupational instruction would "develop a machine-like skill in routine lines" but would sacrifice in the process those "qualities of alert observation and coherent and ingenious planning which make an occupation intellectually rewarding" ([1915] 1966:310). He further objected that to restrict the character of learning in the present would be to "injure the possibilities of present development and thereby to reduce the adequacy of preparation for a future right employment." He warned that such training was suited to "an autocratically managed society," where "a few do the planning and ordering, [while] the others follow directions and are deliberately confined to narrow prescribed channels of endeavor" ([1915] 1966:310).

Dewey's remarks were aimed at the practice of vocational instruction in the high school, at a time when vocational specialization of secondary education was being widely debated. Today, Dewey's concerns are echoed in more contemporary language in objections to the fragmentation and specialization of learning in the post-secondary sector. In Great Britain, critics of the use of competency-based curriculum in the Technician Education Council, the Business Education Council, and Manpower Services Commission have claimed that its undue emphasis on behavioural objectives leads to a "prefabricated and encyclopaedic notion of knowledge," to the belief that "lists can represent the structure of knowledge," and to procedures that are shallow, quick and easy to put into effect. The approach, say the critics, tends to emphasize the learning of routine, unimportant, even trivial material, to inhibit valuable developments in the learning process (Cantor and Roberts, 1979:63-79), and to "block the development of elaborated knowledge or the formation of a coherent political consciousness" (Moore, 1983:30). In Canada, the competency approach has been criticized in a more philosophical vein for its reliance on behaviourist principles, with the charge that it suffers from "excessive reductionism" and failure to account for "intention and meaning" or the "motivational aspects of purposeful action" (Collins, 1983:177). Whatever the critical paradigm, the criticisms suggest that the competency approach stands in opposition to the traditional concepts of working knowledge which have been defended historically by the working class. It reduces the likelihood that education might provide "really useful knowledge" (Johnson, 1979), i.e., that which contributes to the workers' understandings of their own conditions. It raises instead the prospect of a form of schooling which "contributes to depriving the individual of autonomous control over the work process and his [sic] living conditions" (Lenhardt, 1981:200). It thus reduces the potential in education for collectivization of workers' knowledge and the political power which that brings, and increases the potential of the use of working knowledge to assert the interests of capital over those of workers.

Under scrutiny, the whole concept of competence, and the flexibility which it promises, can be seen to be deeply embedded in the employers' interests in labour power. The process of converting a work process into a skill profile of competencies to be mastered subsumes, and depends for its sense upon, the particular social forms in which work is organized in the workplace. But that larger work process itself is specifically excluded as an object of instruction. This form of learning has built into it the subordination of the worker to the employer, not as a matter of proper attitudes or discipline, but as a feature of the division of working knowledge itself. Thus, within the very terms of working knowledge is inscribed the social form of the division of labour which ties together workers and employers in the service of capital.

Through competency-based education, this particular form of the organization of working knowledge is transplanted from the workplace into the educational institutions as that form in which working knowledge will be disseminated, made available for learning. The focus on skills and competencies as the object of instruction largely obscures the developmental aspects of learning and knowledge related to work, how knowledge is modified and enhanced through practice, and how this gain may serve individual or collective welfare. It is a form of mastery in which emphasis on the knowing subject is replaced by a concern to produce an objectified form of knowing, i.e., performance, subject to external controls and measurement. Skill and its subset, competence, are thus educational objectives formulated as a matter of one's ability to service the employer (Grahame, 1983).

Locating Women's Interests

The obvious question to which we must return is why these developments in the world of skills training should be of particular interest to feminists. The answer is manifold. First, competency forms of training have the potential to be used to limit, rather than expand, women's access to opportunities at work. A brief historical example will be used below to illustrate this concern. Second, there is the possibility that the competency approach will be imposed on female dominated areas of training because of prejudicial stereotypes about women's work and skills, and that this development will erode the status and integrity of the fields themselves. Finally, there is evidence that the competency approach itself may be in contradiction with the kinds of knowledge that are in growing demand in the workplace. A brief discussion of changing clerical work processes will illuminate this concern. Each of these issues is explored in brief below.

Women as Circumscribed Labour

As women, we are not strangers to political processes that obscure and devalue work and working knowledge. Women's work has been the victim of such practices for at least two centuries of industrialism. In the struggle of male (and mostly white) workers to preserve their power and stature in the workplace, as well as their dominance in the home, skill definitions have come to be saturated with gender (as well as racial) bias (Phillips and Taylor, 1980). We have learned that the result of having males define women's work and skills is definitions that routinely serve their interests and not ours. The outcome is no bargaining power, poor working conditions, low pay and a dead-end existence (O'Donnell, 1984; Barrett, 1980).

The educational developments examined briefly in this paper need to be understood as part of these long-standing political struggles, extending the battle over skill levels, power and pay from the workplace into the classroom. While the elaboration of competency approaches described here brings a greater level of sophistication to this struggle, the strategic role of education in organizing women's relative position in the workforce is far from new. Education and training have long been important not only because they serve as the gateway for entry to various kinds of work, or because they are a means to acquiring the technical know-how required to perform the job. They have been critical as well because they are part of the social and political processes through which status and power have come to be attached to various kinds of work and knowledge, and through which such stature has been routinely reserved for male workers (Gaskell, 1983; Wickham, 1982; Barrett, 1980).

Patterns of education and training in the twentieth century have channeled women into a narrow range of occupations in the service, clerical and public sectors, while creating barriers to entry in the vast majority of industrial occupations where males predominate. This process has ensured that women's experience and areas of knowledge were largely distinct from those of men, and has organized women's labour power as a separate and unequal entity in the labour market. The contribution of education and training policy to this type of occupational segregation has been widely recognized and has been the focus of much feminist advocacy. By contrast, less attention has been paid to how the programs in which women have been enrolled have systematically prepared them for a "circumscribed working life" (Pierson and Cohen, 1986:67) in either male or female dominated fields. Here the issue is not one of differentiating women's labour according to fields of knowledge and skill, but according to the scope and depth of the expertise that women can bring to bear on their work, and indeed on their employment futures.

The process of circumscription is demonstrated in the context of war-time employment for women by Pierson and Cohen (1986). Their research on the mobilization of women during World War II shows that the training women routinely received for the war industries was not designed to make them into skilled workers on a par with their male predecessors, but rather to employ them as short-term and limited workers at the bottom of the labour hierarchy. In some industries where plant conversions had to take place, production processes were specifically organized to create minute, monotonous operations that could be performed by inexperienced, temporary workers with a minimum of training, while preserving the more complex jobs for long-term employees. As the war progressed, and with it the shortage of labour, women were increasingly recruited into these positions at the bottom of the ranks of skilled workers. In hindsight, there is little question about the character and consequences of the training that was provided in this context:

> Training provided for women under the War Emergency Training Programme was designed to fit them for a specific job for the duration of the war, not for a life-time career as an all-round skilled worker, much less a skilled mechanic who might compete with the men in the post-war job market.... (Pierson and Cohen, 1986:73)

Part of the importance of short-term, job specific training strategies during the war was the possibility of training workers only to the extent that served the immediate needs of their employers in the war industries or the armed services. While the normal length of courses under the War Emergency Training Program was set at three months, gradually shorter courses were introduced, particularly for women. Pierson and Cohen found that the majority of the training courses for women lasted from two to six weeks, and in many cases training was further reduced to a few days on the job. According to one source, the "general and theoretical" aspects of many trainings could be left out because the women had no "long term ambition" in the trades they were learning (Pierson and Cohen, 1986:76). Pierson and Cohen conclude that this training differential was one of several handicaps facing women who desired to continue in a non-traditional occupation at the end of the war.

In the 1980s in Canada as well as in other industrialized countries, women are not learning vocational skills to serve for "the duration of the war" but as the basis to support themselves and their children for the duration of their lives. Yet the forms of training available in an ever-widening number of programs in public institutions are precisely those, such as the competency-based approaches discussed above, that are conceived and developed out of an interest in short-term labour, whether in the context of war or the belief in rapid technological change. The question must be asked, by both men and women, whether by adopting such schemes we are importing not only a mechanism for efficiency, economy, and accountability in education and training, but also for the creation of disposable labour. The desirability of training for disposable labour is a matter for widespread public policy debate, as are questions about how such training might be organized, utilized and paid for.

Women as Stereotyped Labour

The second cause or concern among feminists about the popularity of the competency approach is, quite simply, that it will be imposed on female dominated fields of training, whereas it would be, indeed is being, seen as inappropriate in male dominated fields. A brief look at the program areas in which a competency approach has been implemented in British Columbia will illustrate this concern. On the one hand, such an approach is currently established in pre-apprenticeship or pre-trades level programs, selected programs for other equipment operators (e.g., steam shovel operator, dishwasher operator), and a number of special occupational programs for mentally or physically handicapped students. The bulk of these trainings are for male dominated occupations, and all, significantly, are distinguished by their focus on basic manual operations. On the other hand, the competency approach is being widely implemented in programs for white collar, female dominated occupations in the clerical, social and health care fields, such as early childhood education, human service work, general nursing, medical and dental assistance, and office administration. These programs address a considerable range of learning objectives in the manual, cognitive and affective realms. The contrast among these disparate areas of application is striking and disquieting. The source of this disquiet is evident in the following experience from my recent research in community colleges in B.C.

I have been studying the use of competency analysis as the basis for curriculum revision in clerical programs. In conversation with the Dean of applied programs at a college where I was doing field work, I asked about the choice of a competency approach in the clerical area. His answer was instructive:

> [Competency-based] training is appropriate for certain kinds of areas, but it's not a panacea by any stretch of the imagination . . . I don't think it would be unrealistic to move, for example, typing or word-processing to a certain level of competency approach. Because it's a highly physical type of thing, where you're not necessarily expecting someone to know how a word processing package is able to cut and paste, as long as it will, and you are able to manipulate it, and at a certain speed, and a certain level. That's what we are guaranteeing.(Jackson, forthcoming)

As a matter of record, the clerical programs in which the competency analysis was being introduced in this college at the time of our conversation encompassed all of the office administration programs in the business department. This included not only typing and word processing, but also legal secretarial, general secretarial, and bookkeeping programs and a more advanced program in office systems and records management. The populations in these programs are 99% female, including faculty and students. I did not pressure the Dean for a description of how the subject matter in these programs fit the criteria of "highly physical" proficiency that he had outlined, or for an explanation of how his criteria applied to the other social and health care programs at the college, in which I knew that competency-based approaches were already in use. At the same time, there were several programs in the business department that were male dominated and included some university transfer credits, for which the same type of competency analysis had been suggested by the administration. However, these proposals were met with substantial resistance among those faculty members who would be affected (predominantly male). When I asked these faculty members about their objections to the competency approach, one instructor summed up their concerns: "It was dreamed up by somebody with a small mind!" These same instructors did not object to the introduction of the competency approach in the clerical program areas.

These remarks are suggestive of familiar ways of thinking that routinely discount and discredit women's work and skills, and they draw our attention to the potential impact of such thinking in the arena of education and training policy. Obviously I mean to argue, in a preliminary sort of way, that competency approaches may be imposed on female dominated programs because of any number of reductive stereotypes about women's work and skills, and because they may not be effectively resisted. It is a corollary of Gamson's (1979) observation that the approach has been concentrated in low-status institutions in the United States. If selectively implemented in this way, the competency approach may contribute to the view that women's programs are low-skilled, and indeed have the effect of enshrining a deskilled version of the knowledge and skill base of women's occupations in the programs of instruction. In so doing, the competency approach has the potential to systematize, certify and thereby institutionalize a delimiting or degraded conception of working knowledge for women, rather than an expansive or developmental one.

Contradictions in Clerical Work

Aside from how current developments in competency education are judged on pedagogical, philosophical, or political grounds, there remain some troublesome issues from a purely instrumental perspective. They centre on the extent to which the competency approach is contradictory and dysfunctional in relation to developments in the workplace itself. This argument is germane to the situation of clerical workers in particular because they are faced with rapid transformations in office technology, the character and impact of which are topics of widespread debate.

In the last decade there has been abundant documentation of the negative impact of information technology on clerical work and workers in a wide variety of office and clerical work settings (e.g., Menzies, 1981; Crompton and Reid, 1982; Glenn and Feldberg, 1979). The introduction of large scale electronic systems in the 1970s led to the creation in many work places of large pools of relatively undifferentiated workers, commonly in data entry and word processing pools, performing relatively fragmented, routinized tasks in an isolated and increasingly controlled environment (see e.g., Crompton and Jones, 1984; Glenn and Feldberg, 1979). This picture of the impact of microelectronics on clerical work is consistent with a tradition of labour process analysis that focusses on the fragmentation of skills in twentieth-century industrialism and the loss among workers of power and control over the work processes of which they are a part (Shaiken, 1984; Noble, 1984, 1977; Braverman, 1974). This is the development popularly known as "deskilling."

More recently, labour process researchers have become concerned about aspects of workplace organization which are hidden or disguised by the dominant "deskilling" framework. For example, emerging research evidence suggests that the impact of fifth generation micro-electronics on the skills of office workers is increasingly to polarize skills, creating a growing number of clerical positions which are professionalized, in contrast to those at the other end of the scale which are proletarianized (Appelbaum, 1985; U.S. Office of Technological Assessment, 1985; Adler, 1983). In settings such as banks and insurance offices, researchers have found that many tasks formerly performed by professional or highly experienced workers, relying on their judgment and discretion, can be shifted downward to workers who execute the same functions with the aid of computerized systems of decision making. With the discretionary aspects of the work substantially reduced, the remaining job functions are designated as clerical. Such a reorganization accomplishes a "down-waging" of professional or semi-professional work, while it increases the level of complexity, abstraction and interpretation required in the performance of "clerical" duties. In the insurance industry, for instance, one result of this type of reorganization is that employers are more frequently hiring college graduates for clerical positions to ensure that the general literacy and problem-solving requirements of the jobs will be satisfied (Appelbaum, 1985).

Other researchers have found a similar pattern occurring in office settings in general. They report that integrated office systems distribute the burden of responsibility for the integrity of the work process across a broader range of workers and thus demand broader, rather than narrower, understanding of work processes (Bird, 1980). In this context, the need for general systems comprehension is becoming an aspect of "local mastery" and management, and analysis of information increasingly is becoming the basis of even basic office jobs (Gordon and Kimball, 1985; Adler, 1983; Bird, 1980). The same researchers also point out that those jobs that remain at the extreme pole of deskilling will be increasingly vulnerable to erosion through the introduction of voice-activated systems and optical character readers, as well as on-line entry and self-serve methods of recording transactions.

The educational implications of this vision of changes in clerical work are considerable and stand in stark contrast to the concept of manual proficiency invoked by the college dean quoted above. They cast doubt on the utility – for employers as well as employees – of training in focussed technical proficiency and a narrow understanding of clerical tasks. They point instead toward the need for a broad based approach to clerical education with an emphasis on the capacity for integration and synthesis of information. Movement in this direction is not likely in the current policy climate favoring short-term, specialized programs in the clerical field as well as in other areas of instruction in the community college system in Canada.

Conclusions and Implications

Widespread support for reforms of vocational education and training in Canada is a clear indication that the system of provision has come uncoupled from the interests it is called upon to serve: individual, industrial, social, and political. Our institutions of education and training have remained wedded to outdated pedagogic and occupational objectives, in a climate of continuing uncertainty about labour market demand, while the pressure to find training solutions to economic ills continues to build. Predictably, the solutions that appear to be within reach are themselves born of outmoded methods of thinking and contribute to the problems they are meant to solve. This conundrum is clearly articulated in a recent report from the Silicon Valley Research Group in California who argue that the long-term viability of all forms of narrow technical expertise is called into question by the character of high technology. The authors predict that inasmuch as training institutions proceed within a narrow framework for skills development, they will do a poor job of providing employees with "effectively transferable skills" to cope with fluctuating demands, and will accomplish little more than providing a subsidy to firms by training temporary workers (Gordon and Kimball, 1985:97). On the contrary, Gordon and Kimball argue, programs of education and training should specifically avoid "over-commitment to relatively evanescent skills" in order to achieve their goals of adaptability and responsiveness to industrial needs (1985:106). This reasoning runs counter to the current wisdom and predominant practice in training policy in both Canada and the United States.

In this paper, I have argued that the competency approach to skill training falls precisely into the trap identified by the Silicon Valley Research Group. In the pursuit of flexibility and responsiveness to industry, it produces an organization of vocational training which fails to satisfy the legitimate needs of workers and addresses only the most short-sighted interests of employers. In particular, I have argued that the competency approach will not strengthen the position of women, individually or collectively, vis-à-vis long-term opportunities in the labour market, and that it may in fact serve to erode, rather than enhance the stature of women's job skills. In sum, competency-based training will not further the feminist agenda in education.

The compelling questions that follow from this analysis are not only about method and technique in vocational curriculum, but about the broad purposes and objectives of vocational education and training in Canada, and about the treatment of women in vocational policy. Are the current approaches to vocational/technical training designed to ensure the long-term employment of individuals in a highly demanding labour market and the long-term viability of technical expertise in a highly competitive international economy? Or are these policies designed to produce workers who should anticipate a "circumscribed" relation to the labour market and whose purchase on an employment future will be through a continuous recycling of disposable skills? Will workers in this category routinely include a high percentage of females with average levels of education, while the long term career prospects are reserved for individuals with a university degree? Is the primary utility of these particular policies their capacity to relieve short-term political problems: growing expenditures in the education and training sectors, immediate pressures of unemployment, fear of rising labour costs and faltering profit margins, etc.? If so, what is the responsibility of government to consider the long-term well-being of workers in general and women in particular in the search for solutions? Is there a concept of "flexibility" in training in which the servicing of employers' interests is not at the expense of workers' needs?

While competency-based approaches have had a pervasive influence on vocational/technical instruction in recent years, institutional training opportunities for women have been beset by other problems as well. Critics have repeatedly noted that the introduction by the federal government of the National Training Act in 1979 intensified the barriers to women's effective participation in a wide range of occupational training areas, and continued to channel women into training in low-paid and dead-end occupations. With the coming of the Canadian Job Strategy in 1985, critics have focused as well on the dilution of instruction through emphasis on work-site experience (a practice that benefits the employer in the short run without any assurance of continued employment for the trainee), and on the persistent lack of responsiveness of public educational institutions to the learning needs of under-educated women. (Brown-Hicks and Avedon, 1986; Richardson, 1986; CCLOW, 1986). In other words, perhaps the time has come to re-assess whether women are gaining or losing ground in the training sector as a whole. In making that assessment, let us be wary that vocational relevance is not, as Carol O'Donnell has so aptly put it, "a euphemism for education on the cheap" (1984:170).

Notes

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16

High Hopes and Small Chances: Explaining Conflict in a Women's Job Training Program[1]

Allison Read Tom

Government-sponsored job training programs call up a range of emotions from those who participate in them, run them, and observe them. Government funds are directed to the "neediest" sectors of the population in the hope of solving occupational problems by changing the characteristics of the individuals themselves and making them "employable." The persistent difficulties women have finding steady, well-paying jobs guarantee their inclusion in the list of groups singled out for remedial attention.

On the one hand, women are singled out as a group in great need of assistance in making occupational change and on the other hand are offered training that gives them only limited opportunities for change. Most government training programs continue to train women in traditional "women's" occupations. Women constitute 90 per cent of those in training programs for clerical occupations but only 4 per cent of all trainees in the apprenticeship program, the program with the "greatest earnings and employability gains" (Boothby, 1986:16). These inconsistencies in the direction of government policy have been noted by more than one observer (Boothby, 1986; Dale, 1980), but their significance for relations within programs has not been given as much attention.

In this paper I will use an anthropological perspective to examine the relations within a specific job training program – for banking. The women in this training program, like other workers, are searching for a range of rewards from their jobs. But they are frustrated in the training program and emerge from it only partially grateful and are only moderately fulfilled by the new work the training opens up to them. Their disappointments occur both because of the real limits the labour market places on their job prospects and because of conflicts with the trainers within the program. The purpose of this paper is to explore the conflicts that arise in the training program and the ways trainers and trainees attempt to make sense of these conflicts.

Although they tend to blame each other for their woes, trainers and trainees are both caught in a confusing tangle of good intentions, limited opportunity, and a relatively static social and economic system. The training program is run by a small women's bank, and the Bank's employees are trying to run a bank and create an image that is as efficient and as professional as that of other banks with a staff that consists almost exclusively of trainees. More significant, the training program, because it is located in a bank, is not in a position to offer training in a broad range of occupational skills. The demands of running an effective bank, while providing both banking services and job training, mean that the staff have neither the time nor the organizational flexibility to ask whether or not training for banking positions is the best way to meet trainees' needs. As an organization, the Bank is limited; it can offer specific job training opportunities, but it has neither the power nor the mandate to challenge the realities of the job market which confront its trainees upon graduation.

Several observers have questioned the efficacy of vocational education and job training in settings where the individual and not the system affecting the individual is the focus of remedial action. Grubb and Lazerson (1975, 1982) argue that such education serves a deflective function, diverting attention away from problems in the labour market and focusing it on the "problems" of specific individuals. Kanter concurs:

> none of the personal improvement courses attacks root causes of inequality in the system. . . . They offer a subtle and insidious system-maintaining message. . . . The system remains uncriticized. (1977:262)

Failed attempts to improve individuals' occupational destinies in the face of the reality of the labour market and distribution of rewards into which those individuals move have also been studied in the context of state-run mass education (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Kantor and Tyack; 1982, Wilcox, 1982; Willis 1977). Willis has demonstrated how the meaning of work that schools attempt to teach is reinterpreted by students, who face an occupational and social reality different from the one the school acknowledges (1977).

Ryan (1976) summarizes as "victim blaming" the attitudes and relationships that often develop within programs directed to changing individuals. Victim blamers are unwilling to attack directly the system which, after all, provides them with their own relatively comfortable and rewarding lives, but they are pained by their awareness of social problems such as poverty (Ryan, 1976:28). Rather than directing criticism to a social system that allows unjust disparities between individuals, victim blamers turn their attention instead to the victim and attempt to search out and change his or her individual characteristics:

> These programs are based on the assumption that *individuals* "have" social problems as a result of some kind of unusual circumstances . . . that exclude them from using the ordinary mechanisms for maintaining and advancing themselves. (Ryan 1976:15, emphasis in the original)

In one important sense, the trainers are not the typical "victim blamers" described by Ryan. The trainers' sensitivities to the injustices of the system are sharp; they are well aware of the inequalities between men and women in the economic system. But, as I shall demonstrate below, their vision is less clear when it comes to distinguishing *between* women. They see clearly enough that women in general are victims of the system, but they do not carry this analysis of women's economic inequality over to a broader analysis of economic inequality or theorize about the *class* differences between themselves and the trainees.

Within the training program, conflicts between trainers and trainees arise not because the trainers have set out to trick trainees into a false idea of what the training will do for trainees but because both trainers and trainees are disappointed by the results of the training. Conflict erupts between trainers and trainees because, even when delivered with the best of intentions, job training can have only limited effects when occupational opportunity remains unchanged and when the training teaches skills that are useful only in overcrowded and underpaid occupations.

Beyond both groups' disappointment with the limitations of the power of the training program to change trainees' lives, the conflicts between trainers and trainees erupt because both groups of women place great value on the meaning of work.[2] Work is important to trainees not only because of the economic rewards it offers them (when the expenses of working are considered, many trainees earn only slightly more than state support would pay them if they were unemployed) but because of the many other meanings that are connected with participation in the labour force. Work offers the trainees a sense of dignity and connection to the "outside" world that they have not found elsewhere; and work offers trainees a chance to demonstrate their strengths as independent and competent adults, something that many feel was denied them in their roles as wives and mothers. Trainers also subscribe to this notion that changing trainees' work will change their lives.

The meaning that women attach to the work they do outside the home is coming under increasing scrutiny, but scholars are only gradually attributing to women's work the range of meaning and motives that has been traditionally attributed to men's work. Although many past analyses have assumed that women work either out of financial necessity or for "personal fulfillment," recent scholars are recognizing that women, like men, look to their jobs to provide them with income, daily patterns, meaningful interactions with other adults, and a sense of contributing to society at large (e.g., Acker, 1978; Baruch et al., 1983; Feldberg and Glenn, 1982; Ferree, 1976, 1980). As Myra Ferree observes:

> the fact that most men work from financial necessity and in alienating, dead-end jobs has not disguised the fact that for them work is also a major source of satisfaction and an important part of their lives. (1976:432)

If working is, as Ferree argues, an integral part of how workers in even the lowest status and most routine of jobs make sense of their world, then both the tangible and the intangible connections between work and the rest of life must be investigated.

Anthropology's attention to the meaning that individuals attach to their everyday behavior makes it well suited to a consideration of the way people find meaning in the work they and others do. In his classic statement, Clifford Geertz asserts:

> man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (1973:5)

Traditional ethnographies often demonstrate the way work is integrated into the lives and daily patterns of the people they study and the way different occupational roles express or do not express other social differences between individuals (e.g., Applebaum, 1984; Liebow, 1967; Varenne, 1977; Whyte, 1955). Many anthropologists who concentrate on the study of work have demonstrated the ways in which the choices individuals make about their work are influenced by the meaning they attribute to different kinds of work and by the non-work roles they assume in living their everyday lives. Thomas Rohlen (1973) illustrated how Japanese bank employees' attitudes about their lives complement their work roles. "The implication is clearly made that fulfilling one's duty to [the bank] serves to fulfill one's obligations to society at large" (Rohlen, 1973:5).

Liza Dalby's (1983) discussion of the lives of geishas, while not concerned with describing Japanese life in general, nonetheless provides detailed information on the interaction between the work and the "private" lives of the women who choose to become geishas. Another anthropologist, Enid Schildkrout, demonstrates that paid labour does not always offer women a way to challenge traditional patterns of subordinate female economic and domestic roles. She concludes that in spite of some Hausa Islamic women's intense and successful involvement in economic activity, this activity plays

> little part in determining status; economic "independence," even relative wealth attained from a woman's occupation, does not in itself imply high socio-political status for women in Hausa society. (1979:71)16

Anthropological methods direct attention not only to the broader patterns of social and economic participation but to the meaning that individuals attach to those patterns. Through extended participation in daily events and interviews that explore the meaning different individuals see in those events, anthropologists work to uncover the symbolic connections, the "webs of significance," which bind daily life together into meaningful wholes.

This paper is based on data collected during one year[3] of intensive participant observation and personal interviews conducted in a training program run by an organization I call the Women's Bank.[4] Women are the only customers, employees and trainees at the Bank. The Women's Bank is located in a medium-sized Canadian city. Founded in 1980, the Bank aims to achieve twin goals in the improvement of women's economic status: to offer women alternative banking services and to offer job training opportunities to women.

The training program is supported by federal government funds to train between ten and fourteen women at a time for positions as bank tellers, receptionists, secretaries and loan clerks. Like the federal training program that supports it, the training program is specifically aimed at "long-termed unemployed" and "disadvantaged" members of the labour force. As a matter of policy, the Bank stays well within the government's guidelines concerning the "disadvantaged" status of trainees by accepting only single (separated, divorced or never-married) mothers as trainees. The Bank employs four permanent staff who do both the training and the administrative work of running the Bank; the bulk of the daily work is performed by trainees.[5]

Both the training program and the Bank are heavily dependent on funding from the government training project; my conservative estimate is that over 55 per cent of the 1985 operating budget of the Bank came from one government grant. The Bank applies for and receives other government funds to support additional staff positions, office expansion, and equipment purchase. At the same time that the Bank emphasizes its role as a provider of services to poor women in order to earn government funds, it also attempts to present itself to the general public as a solid financial institution with services of interest to middle- and high-income women as well. The manager expresses her sense of the two publics the Bank serves:

> the people that we address by providing services quite often are those that have fewer options. . . . I always feel very good when women who do have options choose to bank here because of the kinds of objectives that the organization has; the stronger it is and becomes, the more capacity it has to do both the training and providing banking services to a number of different kinds of women for different reasons.

The Trainees

Trainees entering the training program hope to make dramatic changes in their work opportunities. They surmise that when they leave the program they will find jobs in which they can earn more money and find greater social prestige and personal satisfaction than they found in their previous jobs. As their personal lives have changed, their relationship to the labour market has also changed, and the trainees present divorce as one of the major turning points in their lives. Their perceptions of what it means to be a bank teller are vague, but they are drawn by the belief that it will be an improvement on what they have found so far. As the statistics on women's job training indicate, trainees also enter the program because the city is generally unable to offer women like them other kinds of training opportunities.

Each trainee comes to the program for a one-year term; during the year of my study, I was able to become well acquainted with fourteen trainees and four trainers. Trainees' entrance into the program is staggered; one trainee graduates and a new one enters the program approximately every six weeks. Under this arrangement, the Bank is always able to draw upon the services of some experienced trainees in running the Bank's daily affairs. This arrangement also means that new trainees quickly become aware of the range of options that will be available to them as they progress through the program – they can guess how their terms will go by talking to the more senior trainees.

The fourteen trainees are all women who, for one reason or another, are bearing the responsibilities of parenting by themselves. They range in age from 20 to 35; the majority are between the ages of 25 and 28. Eleven of the women are divorced, one is separated from her husband, and two have never married. Most trainees have one or two children, although one woman is the mother of five children (she does not have custody of all five). The children range in age from eighteen months to sixteen years. The majority of the children fall well into the middle of that range, with most between six and twelve years old. Of the twelve trainees who married, eleven were married by the time they were 21; eight married by their nineteenth birthdays. Seven of the fourteen women were mothers by the age of 19 and thirteen of the fourteen were mothers by the age of 25. Four of the fourteen trainees completed high school; the majority completed grade eleven.

The trainees bring a range of employment experience with them to the training program; significantly, only one of the fourteen reported no paid job experience before entering the program. One woman had worked in a bank in her home country before coming to North America and two others had had extensive office experience, one of them in a large collections agency. The other trainees have worked as teacher's aides, taxi drivers, waitresses, nurse's aides, domestics, and sales clerks.

Common themes run through the life stories of most trainees; they say that they once felt they needed little in the way of employment skills and that they concentrated on the rewards of the home as their route to stability and personal satisfaction. Even those who argue that they never fully welcomed their futures as exclusive homemakers maintain that their domestic responsibilities and the expectations of their natal families and then their husbands kept them from expanding their occupational potential as they would have liked to. Common to all of the trainees, too, is a sense of transition in their lives, a feeling that they came to a point at which they decided that they needed to make a determined commitment to the labour force and to improve their labour force opportunities if they and their families were to survive.

For most trainees, this transition point came at or just before the end of their marriages; the two never-married trainees refer to the birth of their children as the point at which they decided they wanted to "be somebody." For both the divorced and the never-married mothers, the recognition that they alone were responsible for their children's well-being gave them a sense both of a huge responsibility and of a great relief. Trainees report being duly impressed with the immensity of the task of supporting themselves and their children; nonetheless, most also report a feeling of freedom when they found that they also had full control over their daily routines. The trainees say that their marriages were both protection from the "need to work" and an impediment to their efforts to work. Some women found that their husbands resented their attempts to build lives for themselves outside of the home; many others simply found that husbands, while they "allowed" or welcomed their wives' employment, felt no need to share the child-care and homemaking tasks with their employed wives. These responsibilities severely limited the trainees' ability to become involved in and expand their work lives.

At the same time that marriage and motherhood imposed increased responsibilities and reduced opportunities on the trainees, they tended to isolate the women from sources of assistance and support outside their marriages. Not only did some feel cut off from friendships by husbands' jealousy and cut off from the rewards and companionship of the workplace by domestic duties, many found that their natal families reduced their involvement in their lives at this critical time. Trainees express a regret for what they lost in marrying and becoming mothers so young. They feel that it was not only work opportunities they sacrificed, but the chance to grow and explore the world that got lost when they married (or, for the two who never married, when they became mothers). Trainees reflect that if from the outside marriage and motherhood looked as if they would provide independence and adulthood, marriage now means dependence on husbands and limited opportunity to them.

In spite of the limitations, difficulties and intense emotions they associate with their marriages, the trainees present the time of the end of their marriages as a time of even greater loss. For most, a one to two year period of confusion or depression followed immediately on the end of the marriage. Many did not have jobs during this period but relied on state aid. One trainee puts it clearly:

> I think it takes a really long time to get things straightened out in your head, you know. . . . Because I mean it's really a frightening feeling. Cause I mean as much as I enjoy working it's really frightening to know that you're the sole support of your family.

Another tells her story in simple understatement: "So, at twenty-two years old, I was separated with two children, unskilled and unemployed. And I found that was really hard."

If the time of divorce was one of confusion and depression, when the trainees are far enough away from their marriages they are unanimous in declaring that divorce was a positive experience for them. Freed of the burden of an uncooperative, often abusive, husband, they were able to seek answers and solutions of their own to the puzzles of parenting and working. Freed of the charade that they were receiving emotional, practical, and financial support from their husbands, they felt legitimate in seeking support elsewhere and in concentrating on developing their own resources and on meeting their own needs as well as those of their children. As one trainee puts it,

> He's a very, not a strong person at all, I was like his mother, I always had to be this, like I don't mind being the strong person, but there are times where you can't always be a strong person. And he never, ever. And now I find being on my own, it's, I have to be the strong person but I don't have to be for him as well.

For the trainees, becoming single or becoming mothers served as a turning point which forced them to recognize themselves as the major support for their families and to make decisions that enhanced their ability to thrive in the new lives which faced them. Divorce thus propelled the trainees into the labour market and forced them to accept working as a permanent and important part of their futures. Although most of the trainees had had some kind of job before the end of their marriages, the end of marriage signalled a new and more intense involvement with work. Some trainees were content to ignore the challenges and rewards of the working world while they were married, and all found that working was particularly difficult while they carried the duties and lived with the expectations thrust upon them as wives. Now, simultaneously freed and compelled to find their places in the labour market, the trainees are only rarely interested in seeking ways to leave these places. For some, this reluctance lies mostly in a continuing distrust of marriage and men, but for the majority distrust is combined with a genuine enthusiasm for the rewards of the workplace.

The trainees thus come to the training program hoping to gain a broad range of the rewards of working. They must have the income that work brings them, but they also value work for the connections with the adult world, the sense of competence and of contribution, and the personal growth work offers them. They want more than simply to be employed and they see the training program as an opportunity to move into work that offers them more personal as well as financial rewards than their previous work. One trainee expresses it well:

> My mother told me when she was here, she says, I hope someday, she wants me to be happy, she's my mother, I hope someday that you meet someone and you settle down and you are happy but I know there's no way anyone could ever take away your independence. Because I've been on my own since I was 23 and I'm very independent. I don't want a man saying to me, you can't go here, you can't go there, forget it. I want to work . . . buy things on my own, don't want to have to depend on my husband to say, well you can only buy this, you can only buy that . . . I realize life is too short . . . no husband ever again would ever tell me what to do. Say I married some millionaire, sit at home on my rear end all day? No way, I mean even . . . now, I don't turn that TV on, I used to years ago . . . I used to be like that.

The Trainers

Like the trainees, the trainers are often vague about the goals of the training program. They are certain that they want to help trainees improve their occupational opportunities and are willing to go to battle to help make changes in trainees' lives, but they are not always as clear about what demon it is they are fighting. Often their efforts are directed to changing the trainees, but sometimes they direct their energies outward to broader problems of the conditions under which the trainees live and work. At the same time that the trainers struggle to find ways to help the trainees, they must also run a respectable bank with limited resources. Caught in this squeeze, the trainers feel that they are continually fighting the fires that are most immediately threatening. Neither the pressure under which they work nor the structure of the Bank itself allows them opportunities to reflect on and make choices about the broader direction of their efforts.

The Bank saw a considerable turnover in its permanent staff during the year of the study. In what follows only the four staff who worked at the Bank for at least seven of the twelve months of the study are discussed. These four women occupy the positions of manager, controller, training officer and computer coordinator. At 33, the Bank manager earns $40,000 a year. The other three staff members range in age from 28 to 30 and earn between $22,000 and $26,000 annually. Three of the four are mothers; two of the four are married (the one unmarried mother had never married). Two trainers are university graduates with backgrounds unrelated to banking and job training; the other two have pursued some post-secondary education. None of the permanent staff has a formal or informal background in job training, although three of the four held supervisory positions before coming to the Bank. When I asked them about their own career plans and the way their responsibilities at the Bank fit into those plans, only one of the four staff members, the manager, discussed a clear connection between the two. Two of the staff members frankly admit that they came because they needed "any job," although they say the program appealed to them as "a good thing to do."

Trainers are also unclear about the exact goals of the training program. They speak vaguely of "helping them [trainees] change their lives" or "giving them job skills" and "motivation." The trainers' sense of what they are doing in the training program and the Bank is not grounded in a specific set of beliefs that explicates why women need a separate financial institution or job training; the need for these services, while considered critical, is taken on faith. Yet in spite of the vagueness with which the trainers explain the goals of the Bank and the training program, they defend the program and their efforts in it strongly. The trainers are committed to their sense of themselves as individuals who are giving other, less fortunate, women a chance to make life better for themselves, but when they try to explain the trainees' lives and difficulties and the solutions they see to these difficulties, they are limited to personal, "exceptionalist" explanations of the problems facing the trainees.

When the trainers talk about the trainees and the differences between themselves and the trainees, their talk, though occasionally patronizing, is often insightful. In general, they tend to focus on personal differences and to explain the different fortunes of the two groups in terms of personal attributes and experiences. While one trainer began discussing difficulties in terms of "social class" and "economics," when pressed for specifics she reverted to discussing the personal attributes of trainees. She began:

> Um, concrete differences, I would say one has education and the other doesn't, most of us have gotten at least some college if not all the way through college. Um, social class, I think that we have come from different social classes . . . and I think both of those have given us different aspirations. I think most of these women, the trainees, expected to get married, stay home, have babies, and live happily ever after. I think this was their initial goal in life. Whereas, . . . I think the core staff had the initial aspiration to have a career, and I don't think the trainees did. . . . And I think that's evidenced by the fact that they all got married very young, had babies very young, and it was like just out of high school or before they even finished high school . . . whereas I think the core staff had a more, well it was a more educated outlook in that a career was something they wanted to develop.

When I asked her specifically why she thought one trainee's life had worked out the way it had, however, she referred back to innate ability to answer:

> I think, it may come down to, she is not that bright a person and did not, is not that, that reflects in motivation, initiative or whatever, she only went to grade 10 or so and quit and probably because she was not a good student, you know that would be an extra push to quit.

When trainers approach their jobs, they do so with a mixture of great hopes for the changes they will be able to bring about in trainees' lives, confusion about the source of the difficulties trainees have encountered so far, and a commitment to a program that assumes that changing the personal attributes of the trainees is the solution to ending their difficulties.

The Training Program

Not surprisingly, both trainers and trainees want far more for trainees than the training program can deliver. The trainers are almost as bewildered and at a loss for explanations as the trainees when faced with the trainees' limited successes in the outside job market. Almost inevitably, the two groups of women direct blame at each other as they try to explain these limitations. Trainees feel that the trainers are insensitive to their needs and ambitions and blame them for providing inadequate training and for failing to help them find jobs when their training is complete. For their part, trainers are frustrated by the trainees' demands when they feel they are giving all they have to give, feel continually overextended by their work loads, and feel unequipped to help trainees find a job. These complaints are more than mere symptoms of a training program with organizational problems; they point to some of the basic contradictions inherent in the Bank's attempt to serve all women equally and to change individuals' lives without addressing the constraints of the social and economic structure in which they live and work.

As trainees move through the program, the hopes that they express for their work change. Their hopes are changed by their experiences within the program and by what they hear of the experiences of trainees who have graduated before them and gotten jobs. Trainees are also frustrated by the lack of time trainers actually devote to training. Trainers, too, find that their jobs are not what they expected them to be. Attracted to their jobs by the appeal of helping other women as well as by the simple need to work, trainers find that their abilities to make changes in trainees' lives are severely limited by their own busy schedules and by the limitations of the job market the trainees enter. Trainers are continually overworked and training is limited by their need to make the Bank an organization that can compete with the large banks to attract wealthy clients.

Trainers' and trainees' common recognition that the training is often disorganized and haphazard is interpreted differently by the two groups. The manager comments on her conversation with a trainee:

> I was talking to her yesterday and she was saying, well, I guess I wouldn't call it a training program, she said, like it's just thrown at you and you have to do it. I said, well, that's exactly what it is, is on the job training [laughs]. You learn as you functionally do and as you do it and do it and do it then you learn and that's what on the job training is. [Imitates trainee's dubious tone of voice.] Well, I guess so.

The manager was amused but the trainee was not. Another trainee complains about the frustration of trying to learn and get answers to questions:

> Like, we're there to learn, the more we learn, more is better. If we go there for a year and only learn half the program, it's no use . . . I would like to know more, and it just, when it comes the time, when I have a question, nobody is there, and when everybody is there it's a busy day so you don't have time to ask a question.

Just as both groups recognize problems in the effectiveness of the training, the following story illustrates how trainers and trainees alike can see circumstances where individual trainees feel wronged by the trainers and propose different interpretations of the conflict. At the halfway point of her training, Sophie had worked as a teller for six months and was looking forward to learning word processing in the second six months of her term. The current training officer left the program at this point and in the ensuing confusion, Cecelia, a trainee with only three months' teller experience, was assigned to the coveted word processing training. Sophie was indignant that the unwritten agreement that six months of teller duty earned a trainee six months of "better" duty had been violated; Cecelia was triumphant that she had transferred so quickly; and the other trainees were concerned over what this meant for their progress through the program. For their part, the trainers were exasperated at what they termed Sophie's "lack of cooperation" and unwillingness to serve the Bank.

Sophie continued to work as a teller but with ill grace, and the trainers then turned their attention from Sophie's ambitions and demands for training to her "attitude problems," using the result of her disappointment as its explanation. The trainers had difficulty understanding how important the training was to Sophie because the difference between the two jobs seemed insignificant to them. Because of their goal of running a "professional" Bank, they had trouble responding to her need. Sophie was the most experienced teller just at the time she wanted to stop being teller – just at the time the Bank needed stability in other areas to compensate for staff turnover. The trainers felt that a hundred valid reasons stood between Sophie and her word processing training, but Sophie felt that these actions demonstrated their conviction that they were in a better position than she to judge what jobs were good for her.

What Sophie and the other trainees fought for, in contrast, was control over their lives, something that is denied to them in subordinate positions. Word processing training offered Sophie a chance at a better-paying, more stable job than bank telling, one that, moreover, she thought was better suited to her personality than bank telling. It was far from her dream job – indeed, she saw it as a way to save money in order to start her own fashion designing business – but it was a better job than bank telling. In this and other activities, the trainees strive to achieve the most favorable balance of rewards within the limited range of choices available to them. When the manager tried to placate Sophie by arguing that she wouldn't really like word processing anyway, she offered a spurious argument; while bank telling and word processing may seem to be overwhelmingly alike, from Sophie's point of view the differences are the only choices she has. Sophie's small fight expresses the continuing struggle facing the trainees in their search for meaningful and stable work. The bewildered, even hurt, response of the trainers to this and other small fights expresses the limitations of good intentions and programs of individual change in the battle against the social inequality connected with occupational inequality.

Just as trainees' initial hopes for specific job training are high, so are their initial hopes for well-paying and satisfying jobs. But by the time they finish the program the qualities they say they value in jobs are more concrete and less ambitious. One trainee charts the changes in her own attitude:

> Like I thought, okay I have a job . . . I'm going to be in the training program for one year and at the end of my year I'm gonna have a great job, it's gonna be paying good, and I'm gonna be able to support myself and everything's

> gonna work right. . . . Well I'm not, I'm still optimistic, but not as much as I was, maybe more, now I'm more realistic.

Another trainee talks about what she thinks a good job would be:

> To understand what I'm doing, the most important thing, to be confident in myself, and if I make a mistake, I can make a mistake and not receive shit because I made it, just explain to me why I made it. And I think I don't like to be supervised, not all the time.

As bank tellers, the trainees find that the glamor of handling large sums of money quickly wears thin and that the apparent "responsibility" of their positions is more illusion than reality. Trainees are also discovering the illusion in the promise of "white collar" work. Some white collar work may be better than some factory work, but having a job in an office no longer guarantees much. Most women continue to prefer office work over factory work (Cavendish, 1982), but the label "white collar" confuses more than it clarifies, and glorifies work that is otherwise often as mundane as stereotypical "blue collar" factory work. As trainees progress through the program, their disenchantment with their new environment grows as does their ability to distinguish between jobs that previously looked much the same to them.

While other complaints fade after they graduate, the trainees continue to feel wronged that the training program offers them job training but provides little or no help in searching for and evaluating actual jobs. This complaint touches at the very heart of the program's limitations: the program gives training but it does not find or create jobs. Over and over I heard trainees complain about how little help they get in the actual process of searching for a job. One trainee notes that trainees seem to be on their own when it comes to the job search:

> I was told . . . that 90% to 95% of the trainees they usually place them. As far as I see, I've only seen, what, two people, being placed . . . through the Women's Bank.

Another trainee points out:

> like they help you with your resume and all that, they help you get it typed up but as far as the actual job search is concerned, you're on your own. It's like, call me and tell me how it went after an interview, but they don't help you find jobs.

The training program can provide job training but it cannot influence what the labour market has to offer those who have completed their training.[6] The trainers withdraw from this process. Their grasp of the job market is not much more sophisticated than the trainees'; a trainee looking for a job is told to look in the want ads. The training program does not even consider the relatively common aggressive approaches to job search promoted in the popular literature (e.g., Bolles, 1981). This is partly because the process of "self-discovery" in the context of the job search such manuals advocate is painfully out of place in a setting that offers a limited variety of job training opportunities. More significant, I believe, is that active engagement in the job search process would directly confront trainers with the limitations of the training and the trainees' job opportunities. By remaining distant from the trainees' actual job search, the trainers also remain distant from the reality of the limited opportunities available and their own powerlessness in facing the job market.

When the training officer reflects on her inability to help trainees find jobs, she attributes it to her relative newness in the city and consequent lack of "connections" on whom she could call to place trainees. She feels that if she knew more bank managers in the city, she would be able to "put pressure" on them to offer jobs to the program's graduates. Most of the trainers' attempts to place trainees are through such particularistic efforts. When trainers approach it at all, the task of finding jobs for trainees is seen in these terms of getting particular people to offer jobs to particular trainees rather than in terms of changing the broader opportunity structure facing trainees and women like them. These attitudes fit well into Ryan's (1976) construction of "particularistic" rather than "universalistic" interpretations of individuals' successes and failures. Trainers approach the placement of trainees as the separate problems of a string of individuals rather than as the problem of a group of people.

When a trainee gets a job and leaves the program, everyone at the Bank celebrates and trainers buy doughnuts to go with the morning coffee. The departing trainee is praised and exhorted to do her best in her new position. As they eat their doughnuts and share a few moments of excitement and warm camaraderie with the trainees, the trainers bask in the glow of their sense of accomplishment – another trainee has a job. Doughnut-time is neither the time nor the place to consider the characteristics of the new job in depth – its pay, conditions, potential, and whether it is a term or a permanent placement – and their busy schedules allow trainers little other time to consider the nature of trainees' jobs.

This attitude is reinforced by the reporting requirements of the government department that funds the program. Annual funding submissions to the department must include reports on the results of the training program, especially on the placement rates of former trainees, and in these submissions and in public presentations the training program consistently claims a "one hundred percent placement rate." While such a claim might imply that all of the program's trainees are employed at hours and jobs they find satisfactory, in reality it only indicates that all of the program's trainees have found some work at some time. The evaluation system used by the government funders allows considerable room for interpretation.[7] The program discounts entirely (or counts as employment): unemployment of trainees less than three months out of the program; unemployment of less than three months duration in other trainees who have held jobs at some time; and unemployment of trainees who have expressed an interest in self-employment. In addition, trainees are counted as "placed" without distinguishing between the number of hours they work, the wages they earn, or the jobs they hold.

The trainers view the program as a "terminal" program leading trainees to places in the job market with no further schooling or training required, but most trainees view their time in the program as only a beginning on the long roads they hope to travel to better and more fulfilling jobs. One trainee reflects:

> I want to go, I want to do the best with my life and I think it's only one step, the first step, and we have to start somewhere. . . . I want to take courses and find a better job. . . . I don't know exactly what is the next step. I know I have to take courses . . . but I think that the real next step is to try to find a job where I can grow.

For the most part, when trainees express their dissatisfaction, they speak of the jobs and opportunities they can see before them. They seem to feel that, overall, the training program has done the best that it could be expected to do. Almost all say that they are glad they went through the training program. As one woman says, the training program "showed me that I had potential."

Trainers and trainees may tend to snipe at each other as they try to explain why the training program has resulted in moderate rather than dramatic changes in the trainees' lives, but from time to time members of each group recognize the difficulties facing all of the women at the Bank. In the end, neither the trainers nor the trainees should bear the blame for occasionally misdirecting their frustrations with a system that encourages trainees' high hopes and then offers them very small chances. One trainee expresses this opinion as she tries to explain how her feelings about the trainers changed over time:

> It's like ever since I'm working with [the manager], ever since I'm working at that front desk and I've seen all the [government] reports and I've typed them and I understand that sometimes they have to, to look at us this way, to get what they want to, to get better things for us or to better things, to better the situation. . . . I understand that. And it's to our benefit. And before, like before, I regarded the . . . staff as, you know, it's just these women who are making $40,000 a year, you know, they don't give a hoot about us. But I don't, no more, I understand what they go through.

This trainee understood the Bank's need to refer to its trainees as "disadvantaged" in order to assure continuing government training funds. Trainers and trainees are only rarely aware, however, of the way the structure of the training program and the goal of achieving occupational change through individual reformation lead them to continuing frustration and persuade them to blame each other for the problems which beset both groups.

The experiences of the trainers and trainees at the Women's Bank training program demonstrate the importance of designing training programs that acknowledge rather than ignore the challenges and limitations of the labour market. Some training programs may choose to use the inequalities of the labour market as a unifying point, an issue around which both trainers and trainees can unite as they work together to create better job opportunities. Others may choose not to take on the entire social and economic system but decide instead to direct their training energies to training for occupations that offer trainees greater chances of economic independence and advancement. Either way, if trainers and trainees are to unite rather than splinter around the difficulties facing them, these difficulties must be an expressly acknowledged part of the training program.

Notes

[1] I would like to thank Jane Gaskell and Arlene McLaren for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper. I am also grateful to Leslie Hamel, reference centre librarian at the Women's Bureau, Labour Canada, for her assistance.

[2] Without denying the importance of unpaid work done in the home, throughout this paper I use the term "work" as my informants themselves used it, to mean paid labour done outside of the home.

[3] February 1984-February 1985.

[4] The name of the Bank and the names of all individuals presented here are fictitious. I have done my best to disguise the identities of the Bank and its employees without distorting essential information needed to understand the training program. Because of the unusual nature of the Women's Bank, I am deliberately vague about a number of identifying characteristics, including the exact source of funding, the Bank's location, and some organizational details. A full account of the research is reported in Tom, 1986.

[5] In keeping with anthropological practice, I use the "ethnographic present" here to describe the Bank as I found it in 1984-1985. Only events that occurred before the fieldwork or that occurred at a specific point in time during the fieldwork are referred to in the past tense.

[6] By March of 1986, all fourteen trainees I had worked with had graduated from the program. Seven of these were employed full-time; three were working part-time; one worked sporadically for a temporary employment agency; and three were unemployed. Of the seven working full-time in March, five had been employed one year or more. One of the other two had just gotten a full-time job in March, and the other had been working full-time for four months. Of the eleven employed trainees, five were working as tellers; three were working as accounting or collections clerks; one was working in a non-teller bank job; and two were working in secretarial positions. The lowest full-time salary earned was $13,000; the highest, earned by a trainee two years out of the program, was $17,000 annually.

[7] This evaluation system seems to have been changed since 1985. It now appears to require more detailed information on the continuous job histories of trainees once they leave the program.

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Future Directions

Though deep conceptual divisions remain, feminist theoretical writing about education manages to be constructively critical. Perhaps we are moving towards a synthesis of feminist educational approaches (Acker, forthcoming). Whatever their political orientation, all the contributors to this volume would like to see the educational system become less sexist. By challenging male-biased knowledge, we are attempting to make educational arrangements more favourable to girls and women. By incorporating women's concerns into our studies of education, we hope to redefine the boundaries of education, its pedagogy and knowledge. In a general sense, we are attempting to reshape education so that it may ultimately serve better the interests of both males and females.

As feminist scholars we aim our work at both academic and political ends. Like the founders of the social sciences, we do not see the academy as something separate from society (Bowles and Klein, 1983). We wish to reform as well as inform. We believe that either directly or indirectly our research can provide an action-oriented agenda which can help public agencies to eliminate gender-based imbalances in education (Kelly, 1984).

Canadian educational scholars and activists who want to promote gender equality are, however, enveloped by the current inhospitable economic and political climate. Following a period of recession during the late 1970s, the economy has only slowly recovered and continues to be plagued by high rates of unemployment. In 1982, there were 200,000 fewer full-time jobs in Canada than in 1980 (Armstrong, 1984, p.121). Employment growth of jobs has been concentrated in low-status, part-time positions, most of which have been filled by women. Electronic technologies, referred to by Menzies (1982) as the "second industrial revolution," will continue to eliminate jobs and alter the labour process. Women's work is likely to suffer most of all.

Recent "restraint" budgets have also hit women particularly hard. In response to the economic crisis and government deficits, governments have reduced expenditures on social programs. Women comprise the largest group needing social assistance, the largest group of government employees in education, health and social welfare, and the largest group requiring redress for systematic discrimination. Since education is a major area of expenditure it is especially vulnerable to public spending cuts. Such cuts cause difficulties directly for women raising their children, women teaching other people's children, and educational policies designed to rectify systematic discrimination against females. As a result of the July 1983 legislative restraint package created in British Columbia, for example, colleges and institutes reduced spending in women's studies courses, funding women's access coordinators, approving loans to part-time students (the majority of whom are women), and issuing grants (Bueckert, Renaud and Stewart, n.d.).

At a time when governments do not perceive gender inequality as a problem, much less as a problem that they can solve, the role of feminist scholarship is especially critical. As Sylvia Gold, president of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, asserts:

> The question here is not whether governments have an obligation to put forward policies which break down barriers in all facets of women's lives, including education. *They unquestionably do*. However, the women's movement must *define* the public policy issues, *propose* concrete policies that address them, and *push for* their implementation to ensure an improvement in the status of women in this country. The role of academics in the women's movement is crucial. (1986, p.10)

To understand the possibilities of transforming the Canadian educational system to reflect women's as well as men's concerns, we need to consider two questions. First, what kinds of changes in policies, pressure groups, and resources have so far taken place which may improve women's position in education. Second, what kinds of questions do researchers need to explore in the future so that educators, policy-makers and the general public can understand more fully how gender affects the educational process.

What Has Been Done to Solve the Problem?

During the past two decades, pressure to improve female education has grown substantially. Governments have initiated policies that can either directly or indirectly serve to improve women's educational experiences. The women's movement has vigorously pushed for changes in policy and has become increasingly organized. A wide range of groups has actively sought to promote women's education. We will review briefly some of the major policies, organizations, and resources that have developed recently in Canada and are relevant to women in education.

Since the late 1960s, several national milestones have marked improvements in female opportunities in education as elsewhere. In 1970, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women made 167 recommendations to the government, several of which were concerned with education (e.g., elimination of sexual stereotyping in textbooks). In response to one recommendation, the government created in 1973 the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. It monitors trends, conducts research, consults with women's groups and informs and advises government committees, task forces and officials on issues of concern to women. In the same year, the government established the Women's Program as a responsibility of the Secretary of State. The Program is the principal means by which the federal government funds women's voluntary organizations designed to improve the status of women. Since 1971, a minister has been responsible for the status of women; in 1976, Status of Women Canada was instituted to coordinate government activities in relation to women.

In 1978, the federal Canadian Human Rights Act came into effect. The Act contains a provision for equal pay for work of equal value, which applies to all federal public servants and employees of federal Crown Corporations and federally regulated private sector companies. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of Canada's constitution (1982), includes sections 15 and 28 (1985) which guarantee equality between women and men. The Employment Equity Act (Bill C-62), which came into effect in 1986, is aimed at removing employment barriers and promoting equality for women, native people, disabled persons and visible minorities. The legislation applies to all federally regulated companies and crown corporations with 100 or more employees. In response to this legislation, some universities have begun to develop formal employment equity policies (Casey, 1987).

Beside putting into place wide-ranging policies and programs that may advance women's position in a variety of areas, the federal government has introduced gender targets into job training programs. Employment and Immigration Canada has designed policy initiatives to broaden the range of occupations for which women train. These policies are meant to encourage women to seek non-traditional training and occupations. Under the National Training Act, EIC introduced the Women in Non-Traditional Occupations Program in 1980. These initiatives have encouraged some women to train in non-traditional occupations. A significant minority of women now train in non-traditional occupations, but they still make up only a small fraction of all trainees in these occupations, as we pointed out in the introduction to Part Four.

Legislative changes to improve women's position have also taken place at the provincial and municipal levels. These jurisdictions vary a great deal in the kinds of programs and policies they have established. At the provincial level, they range from "Women's Secretariats" that exist within specific ministries and provide local groups with discretionary grants to Human Rights Commissions which receive complaints alleging sexual harassment.

Some ministries of education (provincial or territorial) have allowed for the development in high schools of distinct women's studies courses or the integration of women-related subjects into the pre-existing curriculum. Many colleges and universities have established women's studies courses or programs (Brodribb, 1983a). Such courses differ from one another in how long they have been established, how secure they are within their institution, and how broad their coverage of subjects is (for an overview, see Strong-Boag, 1983). Some educational institutions have developed or are in the process of developing specific policies and resources on such issues as sexual harassment, pay equity, affirmative action, and day care (Brodribb, 1983b).

Many of the above governmental and institutional initiatives have risen in part as a result of the work of feminist pressure groups. Self-avowed feminists, and those who simply would like girls and women to have a better education, have organized to improve their lot. Several groups have been, however, particularly responsible for alerting the government to women's educational and training needs. CCLOW (the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women), a national, non-profit women's organization established in 1979, actively promotes feminist principles in education and the empowerment of women. Its activities include research projects and policy papers, advocacy work, and a quarterly publication, *Women's Education des Femmes*. CRIAW (the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women), founded in 1976, and the Canadian Women's Studies Association, established in 1982, are dedicated to facilitating the work of feminist scholars and educators. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women, created in 1972, represents hundreds of Canadian women's groups. Its primary functions are to keep groups abreast of issues relevant to women (including education and training), and to lobby policy-makers.

Besides these national feminist groups, a myriad of other organizations have produced teaching resources, curriculum handbooks, media kits, videotapes, and teachers' publications to combat sexism in education. These resources are designed to make girls and women more visible in the curriculum and to encourage students to consider a wider range of curriculum and job choices. Examples of groups that compile such resources are: Canadian Teachers' Federation; Relais-Femmes, Quebec; Douglas College Women's Centre, New Westminster, B.C.; Tele-universite, Quebec; Nova Scotia Department of Education; Ontario Ministry of Education; B.C. Teachers' Federation; and Department of Education, Yukon Territorial Government (for more details see *Resources for Feminist Research*, 12 (3), 1983). Community and women's organizations now offer a variety of bridging and skills-training programs for women. In Toronto alone, more than twenty such programs are available (Dance, 1985, p.11).

Organizations and policies such as those above provide a framework that can allow challenges to gender inequalities. As an illustration, we can look at Pay Equity legislation. It is one of the key policies that may improve women's employment, and thereby increase the value of their education. Such legislation has been enacted at the federal level (1978), in Quebec (1976), Manitoba (1984), and Ontario (1987). At the federal level, and in Quebec, pay equity is administered by the respective Human Rights Commissions on a complaints basis. In Manitoba and Ontario, the legislation is proactive – it requires employers, under a specific set of conditions, to initiate pay equity programs. As of 1984, the federal Human Rights Commission had received 68 complaints regarding unequal pay for work of equal value. Thirty complaints were dismissed or withdrawn, 2 were before independent human rights tribunals and 18 were under investigation. Eighteen of the complaints were settled. This resulted in retroactive pay amounting to $20 million and annual pay increases of $12 million to 4,600 workers (Arrowsmith, 1986, p.64).

Such legal challenges directly affect only a few employers and workers. But they can have a ripple effect on other workplaces and on the consciousness of the general public. With these incremental changes, girls may become increasingly aware that mechanisms are available to challenge unequal pay, that more worthwhile jobs may be available to them, and that their education may have a greater payoff. Since pay equity policies help to "revalue the female," girls may eventually be able to choose "traditional" female occupations without being penalized financially.

Despite such a flurry of activity, however, it is not at all clear that Canadian women are better off now than they were twenty years ago. Canadian women's progress may be a question of "now you see it, now you don't." What seems to be a victory for women, upon reflection may not be. The fact that the wage gap between women and men has declined, for instance, may have resulted from a drop in average male earnings, not from an acceleration of women's (Shifrin, 1987). As Doris Anderson (cited in Nemiroff and Vander Voet, 1983, p.8) quips: "We always get something, but not what we want."

There are a variety of reasons why public policy may not be effective in promoting women's progress. For most policy-makers and analysts, the problem of gender inequality is not a major priority. For example, Wilkinson's (1986) recent comprehensive survey of elementary and secondary education policy in Canada does not broach the question of gender inequality at all. Another example is the new Canadian Jobs Strategy which in its emphasis on private training leaves little room for women's concerns for personal growth, for consciousness-raising, or for broadening general knowledge (Breault, 1986). The political climate at best is ambivalent. Policies that promote women's interests coexist with those – cutbacks, privatization – that don't. Policies that are brought in are often too weak to be very effective. The Employment Equity Act, for instance, insists only that, by 1988, employers covered by the legislation submit annual employment equity reports. The legislation does not require employers to implement employment equity measures and to establish goals and timetables. Moreover, there is no enforcement agency (Coates, 1986, p.47).

Depending on the political and economic climate, the measures that are brought in can have contradictory implications for women's status. They may be both beneficial and harmful. The Canadian Charter could lead to gains for women, but the prospect of new gains seems distant when, to date, so much legal time has to be spent protecting the gains women have already made.

Education is a particularly difficult area to change because of the different jurisdictions involved – federal, provincial, territorial – and because of the largely conservative nature of schooling. There is plenty of evidence to support the contention of Abella in her Report of the Commission on Equality in Employment (1984) that the movement of education is "glacially slow:"

> Education has been the classic crutch upon which we lean in the hopes of coaxing change in prejudicial attitudes. But education is an unreliable agent, glacially slow in movement and impact, and often completely ineffective in the face of intractable views. It promises no immediate relief despite the

> immediacy of the injustice. (p.8)

Though feminists examining education face daunting odds in their desire to improve the position of women, they have, as Nemiroff and Vander Voet (1983, p.9) put it, at least one decided advantage: "The state and its own resources have a jump on us in every category of operation . . . except perhaps commitment to women's causes." While the predominance of men in educational decision-making positions is a major obstacle to feminist reform, the desire for change amongst women is sufficiently strong to enable some optimism about improving women's educational experiences. Hamilton (1985) is able, for example, to note optimistically the extent to which an oppositional current has been established by feminist politics and scholarship within academic disciplines:

> Feminists have indeed carried their protest into the university. . . . They have challenged not only the structure of the university, and the limited place of women within it, but also the very parameters of what constitutes knowledge, and many of the assumptions underlying the traditional academic disciplines. In simplest terms, the feminist slogan, borrowed from the New Left, that 'the personal is political' not only legitimated new areas of research, but also probed their links with broader political, economic and social relations. (p.3)

The growth of feminist research during the past two decades has been truly staggering and suggests that policy-makers may be increasingly unable to neglect women's issues.

Research Directions

Though all feminists who focus on education are concerned about gender inequality, their analysis of how and why it occurs, and what should be done about it varies. Doing feminist research involves political assumptions, but also a variety of theoretical and methodological questions that go beyond the political realm. How should feminist research on education proceed? Where do we go from here, as researchers? Putting up signposts in these directions is a major function of the essays in the present collection.

By and large, the political assumptions that have informed feminist questions and theoretical frameworks have been taken from the liberal orientation that has dominated policy agendas. As Acker (1986, pp.9-10) notes: "Virtually the only discourse admissible to public debate is the liberal-feminist equal opportunity one – with the accent on *opportunity* rather than *equal*." In Canada, feminist researchers have exposed the prevalence of sexism in textbooks, the low rate of female access to male-dominated education and training, and unequal opportunities for female educators. They have called for new forms of curricula that add women in, career counselling that encourages females to consider non-traditional work, and hiring and promotion practices that do not discriminate against females.

Recent radical feminist theory offers new questions and paradigms for researchers, ones that open up exciting new possibilities for inquiry. With this new direction, researchers have moved from a demand that females catch up to males and that gender differences be eliminated to a celebration of those differences, particularly, the female experience. Research reveals that our culture uses the male experience as the norm and thereby denigrates the female experience. Feminists have begun to utilize women's experience as a source for an alternative vision and alternative values. Women's culture, women's organizations, and women's experiences are retrieved from the devaluation they receive in the hands of male-oriented researchers. This new research provides a redressing of the balance that is sorely needed. By revaluing the female, we begin to understand how deeply gender affects our lives and how different strategies for change may be appropriate. Feminists call for schools to adapt to the interest of females, for curricula and pedagogy to reflect female ways of thinking and behaving, for a valuation of "traditional" female activities, courses, and occupations.

Insights of radical feminists that point to the commonalities of women's experiences have been immeasurably useful for understanding gender. But socialist feminist theory, partly in response to radical feminism, has also helped to advance the debates on education. Socialist feminism argues that much feminist analysis is taken from a particular social position, that of middle-class, western, white women. Radical feminism, they argue, is too prone to root women's experience in biology and to value it above male expression. Radical feminism exaggerates the antagonistic relations between women and men, overemphasizes differences, and ignores the diversity of women's experiences. It distorts research and misdirects action, and makes women feel as alienated by traditional stereotypes as they have been under male scholarship. The gender categories celebrated by radical feminists – woman as nurturer, as comforter, as peacemaker – are historically and culturally specific constructions.

Instead we must examine the specificity of gender. A woman's class, race, culture and age also influence what happens to her. A working-class woman, a middle-class woman, a native woman, a female child, and an old woman all experience being female in different ways, ways that affect their desires, their aspirations, their education, and their working lives. Gender cannot be separated from other social conditions. People experience them all together. From this analysis, feminists have called for an inclusion in research of the experiences of females of different classes, colour, ethnic groups and so on. If schools are to be responsive to women's interests, they must recognize diversity. Socialist feminists concerned about schooling have also called for changes in the economy and family. They argue that as long as most women are used as a cheap labour force, and are burdened with domestic responsibilities, improving their education will have little effect.

All feminists, regardless of their political stripe, are critical of male-biased knowledge. But once having launched this critique, the question of where this will take us in our pursuit of knowledge needs to be addressed. Some argue for female-centred knowledge, others for non-sexist knowledge. Female-centred knowledge establishes a distinct knowledge base – which may be called women's studies, feminist studies or feminology – derived from the female experience. It generates questions and answers by concentrating on women. It starts with the position of women and aims to reach a better understanding of the particularities of the female condition. A non-sexist mode of inquiry requires female-centred knowledge, but seeks to integrate the concern for women into research questions so as to transform "malestream" knowledge. It aims to transform both the current male-centred and incipient female-centred approaches into something that is non-sexist (Eichler, 1987). The present collection is not only founded in a belief in the necessity for such an approach but is also presented as an attempt to discover it can be accomplished.

Questions of method are essential to the debate concerning separation and integration of feminist thought. Some argue that a revaluation of the female implies a distinct methodology. With a concern for the legitimation of woman-centred knowledge, new questions are generated and a different relationship between the researcher and subject is constructed. Feminist research must not start from the knowledge of "experts" but from the standpoint of ordinary individuals. As feminist researchers, we must respect the female view of the world and our personal interactions with our "subjects." Female subjectivity becomes central to the generation of knowledge and a means to test its validity. To capture female-centred knowledge, exploratory and qualitative research is especially important. But as researchers we also have an obligation to examine patterns that are obscured in everyday life and to look at what accounts for women's experience of the the world. Theorizing and going beyond women's experience is necessary to grasp the complexities of the social fabric.

If we are to understand adequately the extent to which society, including education, is gendered, we need a dramatic improvement in the gathering of statistical data, its analysis and dissemination. Documentation of the gender segregation of education, training, employment and income is either spotty, inconsistent, or non-existent. More systematic data is necessary in order to target priority areas and to analyze the kinds of policy interventions that are likely to be most effective. If institutions are to be held accountable for improving the position of women, administrators need the appropriate statistical data to monitor it. Quantitative research can be a important tool for women, revealing patterns of inequality, and exploring associations between social conditions and women's experience. We can use this data to generate knowledge so long as we do not forget to be "vigilantly suspicious" of the way it is used, and the categories it embodies.

Having a sound female-centred/non-sexist methodology is indispensable to good educational research. So is having a sound theory. Feminists have had to rely on existing theories to help them develop their own language, concepts, and propositions. They have had to deal with broad debates that arise from the theoretical traditions within which they work. A central debate of most contemporary theories regarding inequality concerns the contest of "structure" versus "agency" and evaluates the extent to which structural features of biology, psychology, or society influence one's social position and the extent to which people are active agents able to respond to such structural features. Feminist research has begun to expose the ways in which women have been oppressed by the structures of male-dominated society. It has shown how male-dominated cultures socialize males and females into rigid sex roles, how educational and economic systems channel women into low-status occupations, and how institutions of the family oppress them. Such research has been useful in pinpointing how women acquire a low status in society. At the same time, much of this research has inadvertently denied women the possibility of making decisions, of responding to their conditions, of taking control of their lives. It has reinforced stereotypes of women's passivity, and provided little understanding of how women learn to survive and struggle within the power structures of society.

Future feminist research needs to be contextualized, and to solve the dilemma of "agency" and "structure." Women are at the same time active agents struggling to control and change their lives and constrained subjects shaped by social, cultural and economic structures. Women make choices, but the choices available are not of their own making. They become mothers, teachers, child care providers or whatever not merely because of their biology or socialization, but because, within the given social context, it makes sense to do so. Research needs to present women as neither passive victims nor heroic superwomen who can remake the world as an act of will. The notion of contextualized action, always socially situated, always problematic, must guide and inform our research.

As these questions suggest, in the space of only two decades, feminist researchers have accomplished a great deal. In the educational realm, they have revitalized old questions and developed new ones. Their work has only begun. The prospect of improving girls' and women's education in Canada, if daunting, is an exciting one.

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Jane S. Gaskell

Arlene Tigar McLaren

Understanding the nature of the educational system is a major concern of the general public, policy makers, social scientists and students. In *Women and Education*, the authors argue that we cannot possibly understand education without considering it as a gendered experience. This is the first book-length overview of women and Canadian education. The contributors are Canadian scholars who build on recent feminist scholarship, indicating the varied forms that the study of women in education is taking. The purpose of the book is to make knowledge about women in education available, as it is too often excluded from standard works on education. By exploring the questions raised by female educational experiences, it also aims to introduce new ways of thinking about education in general, ways that will help us understand the complex relationship between education and the society in which it exists.